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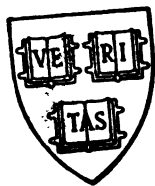
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THE
LIFE AND BEAUTIES
OF
FANNY FERN.

NOTHING EXTENUATE, NOR SET DOWN AUGHT IN MALICE.

NEW YORK:
H. LONG AND BROTHER.
121 NASSAU-STREET.
1855.

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✓
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P R E F A C E.

IN preparing for the press "THE LIFE AND BEAUTIES OF FANNY FERN," we have given to the reader a statement of the most prominent incidents in her eventful career, which is authenticated, not only by the testimony of her nearest relatives, but by communications from her own lips. The lives of distinguished men or women have always been accounted public property, and, in narrating that of Fanny Fern, we have confined ourselves to simple facts, leaving the fancy-pictures to be filled up by others.

In giving selections from her "Beauties," we present the reader with a bouquet of "Ferns," all freshly gathered. In so doing, we have infringed on no one's copy-right; the sketches having been copied, in every instance, from the papers to which they were originally

contributed. A large proportion of them have never before appeared within the covers of a book. These latter are the very articles upon which Fanny made her reputation. We have given quotations which do justice to every variety of her versatile style. One page flashes with the keen edge of satire, another brims over with mirth, and a third is tearful with pathos.

We have shown Fanny at home, on the street, and in church, and have thus furnished a key which will unlock many of the mysteries of "Ruth Hall," and "Fern Leaves."

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LIFE AND BEAUTIES
OF
FANNY FERN.

I.

GENIUS IN PANTALETTES.

SARAH PAYSON WILLIS, the subject of this sketch, was born in Portland, Maine, July 9th, 1811. Through the negligence, doubtless, of the clerk of the town, it is not recorded that the sun stood still on the eventful morning, but old housewives tell a legend of the cocks' crowing with extraordinary shrillness in honor of this wonderful advent. She is the daughter of Mr. Nathaniel Willis, one of the most industrious and respectable citizens of Boston, now a man well advanced in years. It is scarcely necessary to add that she is sister to Mr. N. P. Willis, the brilliant essayist and poet.

Mr. Willis, senior, "commenced life" as a me-

chanic, and at the time of his marriage worked at the case as a journeyman printer. He afterwards published the *Eastern Argus*, in Portland. Meeting with reverses in that city, he removed to Boston, where he established, and for many years edited, the "*Recorder*," the oldest religious paper in New-England.

Mr. Willis has met with a similar experience to that of most men in his calling. He never made a fortune at publishing. At the present time, although aged and infirm, he finds it necessary to devote his failing energies to the publication of the "*Youth's Companion*." Yet, notwithstanding his narrow means, Mr. Willis contrived—at how great a sacrifice only parents can guess, to give his sons and daughters that education which is a poor man's noblest legacy.

II.

FANNY AT SCHOOL.

IN accordance with the course he had wisely planned for his children, Sarah Willis—the veritable “Fanny”—was favored with an early introduction into the seminary of Miss Catherine E. Beecher, in Hartford, Conn. At this well-conducted establishment—the most popular in the country, at that time—Miss Fanny received her first strong impressions of life and the world. We have never heard her spoken of as a very apt or studious pupil. Staid works of philosophy and learning were not much to her taste. But from the prohibited pages of romances and poems, eagerly devoured in secret, her craving genius derived an active stimulus. Already she had become a keen dissector of the human heart, and she found plenty of pleasant practice for the scalpel of her wit among

the young ladies of the school. Here, too, the novel and startling experiences of boarding-school flirtation gave their warm coloring to her future life. Fanny possessed a large capacity for this description of knowledge, and her writings show a better memory for those more pleasant branches of female education, than for the dry rules of syntax and prosody. In fact, the best of her sketches are transcripts of her school-girl life—for Fanny writes well only when giving the concentrated vinegar and spice of her own vivid experiences.

A sketch of Fanny's, entitled "A LEAF FROM MY EXPERIENCE," referring to her school-life, may, perhaps, form the best embodiment of the earlier portion of her school-history.

"Miss Jemima Keturah Rix was at the head of a flourishing school for very young ladies and gentlemen. She originated in the blue state of Connecticut, where the hens, from principle, refrain from laying eggs on Sunday, and the yeast stops *working* for the same reason. She had very little opinion of her own sex, and none at all of the other. Her means were uncommonly limited, yet 'she was too much of a gentlewoman to keep school, had it not been for her strong desire to reform the rising generation.'

"In person, she was tall and spare, with small, snapping black eyes, and thin, compressed lips, telling strongly of her vixenish propensities. She could repeat the Ten Commandments and Assembly's Catechism *backwards*, without missing a word; and was a firm believer in total depravity and the eternal destruction of little dead babies.

"She had the usual variety of temper and disposition, generally found in a school, and a way of her own of getting along with them. She would catch a refractory pupil with one hand by the shoulder, and press the thumb with such force into the hollow of the arm, that the poor victim was ready to subscribe to any articles of faith or practice she might see fit to draw up; and who of us will soon forget that old brass thimble, mounted on her skinny forefinger, as it came snapping against our foreheads?

"Being considered an untamable witch at home, I had the ill luck to be sent to this little initiatory purgatory. This was unfortunate, as Miss Rix and I looked at life through very different pairs of spectacles. The first great grief I can remember, was when I was about as tall as a rosebush,—nearly breaking my heart, because a little boy *threw away* one of my ringlets, that I cut off for his especial keeping. In fact, I may as well own it, I was *born*

a *coquette*; and the lynx eyes of Miss Rix had already discovered it.

"She always made a chalk line on the floor between the girls and boys, that neither were allowed to cross without a special permit. Being aware of this, I had been in the habit of making certain telegraphic communications with a little lover of mine, in jacket and trowsers, on the other side of chalk-dom.

"Little dreaming of the storm that was brewing, I sat watching her one morning, as she slowly drew from her pocket a long piece of cord, and tested its strength. Raising her sharp cracked voice to its most crucifying pitch, she called,

"'Miss Minnie May and Mr. Harry Hall step out upon the floor.' Of course, we didn't do anything else, when, turning us back to back, she silently proceeded to tie our elbows together with the cord, remarking, with a satanic grin, as she sat down, that 'we seemed to be so fond of each other, it was a pity to keep us apart.'

"Now this was a very *cutting* thing to me, in more ways than one, as Harry's jacket sleeves protected *his* arms, while my little fat elbows were getting redder every minute from the twitches he made to extricate himself; for, like some bigger boys, he was very willing to be a *fair-weather* lover,

but couldn't face a *storm*. I've never forgiven him for it, (true to my woman nature,) and though I often meet him now, (he is a thriving physician with an extensive practice;) and he looks so roguishly from out those saucy black eyes, as much as to say, 'I wouldn't mind being *tied* to you now, Minnie,' I give him a perfect freezer of a look and 'pass by on the other side.'

"I understand that Miss Rix has rested from her labors and gone to her reward. I wish no better satisfaction than that she *may get it!*"

. III.

THE NEW NAME.

FANNY'S career as a young lady seems to have been very lively. She recalls many amusing reminiscences of early flirtations. Among others, she led away captive the heart of a certain Unitarian clergyman, the son of a wealthy family. As *she* affirms, however, "papa" concluded that he had learned the Westminster Catechism to so little purpose as to be no safe partner for his orthodox daughter. But, like a large spare chamber, swept and garnished, her affections had plenty of room for a new occupant.

There were breezy walks on the common, mysterious whisperings over skeins of thread with handsome clerks, until at length the conquering hero came. Like a sun-flower in the beams of morning, her heart expanded at the warm suit of her favored lover.

May 4th, 1837, at a period of well-matured womanhood, Sarah Willis became Sarah Eldredge. The fortunate husband of the yet undeveloped genius, was an only child—the son of the late Dr.

Eldredge, -a highly esteemed physician, in the neighborhood of Boston. Her first child died at the age of three years, but two remaining daughters, the fruit of this union, now reside with their mother in New York. One is about ten, and the other we should judge from her appearance to be some fifteen years of age.

Mr. Eldredge enjoyed a handsome income from his services as cashier of the Merchant's Bank, the largest institution of the kind in Boston. Now we esteem the domestic virtues of economy and prudence; but a penurious mode of life is not so readily pardoned as the opposite extreme of lavish expenditure; and the devoted husband of so spirited a young wife may certainly be excused for "living" to the extent of his means. But, as Othello very properly observes, "Who can control his fate?" Had the young banker been as wise as he was generous and indulgent, he would have looked forward through the long, bright vista of the present, to that proverbial "rainy day," liable at any time to befall. In the prime of manhood, October 6th, 1846, he was cut off by a sharp, quick stroke from Death's remorseless hand; and the wife and mother, awaking suddenly from her gay dreams, saw affliction and widowhood descend upon her like a pall.

IV.

THE HUSBAND'S DEATH.

THROUGHOUT the whole course of Fanny's writings we are presented with frequent and most pleasing pictures of her own self. Not only does she figure as the graceful heroine of "Ruth Hall," but all her sketches have a connection more or less remote with the events of her own life. The following sketch, as we are assured, is a description of the death of her husband, though it contains one of the customary portraitures of Fanny herself.

"THE YOUNG WIFE'S AFFLICTION.—A delightful summer we passed, to be sure, at the ——— Hotel, in the quiet village of S——. A collection of prettier women, or more gentlemanly, agreeable men, were never thrown together by the

necessity of seeking country quarters in the dog-days. Fashion, by common consent, was laid upon the shelf, and comfort and smiling faces were the natural result. Husbands took the cars in the morning for the city, rejoicing in linen coats and pants, and loose neck-ties; their wives, equally independent till their return, in flowing muslin wrappers, not too dainty for the wear and tear of little climbing feet, fresh from the meadow or wildwood.

"There were no separate 'cliques' or 'sets;' nobody knew, or inquired, or cared, whether your great grandfather had his horse shod, or shod horses for other people. The ladies were not afraid of smutting their fingers, or their reputation, if they washed their own children's faces; and didn't consider it necessary to fasten the door, and close the blinds, when they replaced a missing button on their husband's waistband, or mended a ragged frock.

"Plenty of fruit, plenty of fresh, sweet air, plenty of children, and plenty of room for them to play in. A short nap in the afternoon, a little additional care in arranging tumbled ringlets, and in girding a fresh robe round the waist, and they were all seated in the cool of the evening on the long piazza, smiling, happy, and expectant, as the

car bell announced the return of their liege lords from the dusty, heated city. It was delightful to see their *business faces* brighten up, as each fair wife came forward and relieved them from the little parcels and newspapers they carried in their hands, and smiled a welcome, sweet as the cool, fresh air that fanned their heated foreheads. A cold bath, a clean dickey, and they were presentable at the supper table, where merry jokes flew round, and city news was discussed between the fragrant cups of tea, and each man fell in love with his pretty wife *over again*, (or his *neighbor's*, if he liked !)

"It was one harmonious, happy family! Mrs. — and her husband were the prime ministers of fun and frolic in the establishment. It was *she* who concocted all the games, and charades, and riddles, that sent our merry shouts ringing far and wide, as we sat in the evening on the long moonlit piazza. It was she who planned the picnics and sails, and drives in the old hay-cart; the berry parties, and romps on the green; and the little cosy suppers in the back parlor just before bed time (that nobody but herself could have coaxed out of the fussy old landlord.) It was she who *salted* our coffee and *sugared* our toast; it was she who made puns for us, and wrote verses; it

was she who sewed up pockets in overcoats, or stole cigars, or dipped the ends in water; it was she who nursed all the sick children in the house; it was she who cut out frocks, and pinafores, and caps, for unskilful mothers; it was she who was here and there, and every where, the embodiment of mischief, and fun, and kindness; and as she flew past her handsome husband, (with her finger on her lip,) bent upon some new prank, he would look after her with a proud, happy smile, *more eloquent than words.*

"He was the handsomest man I ever saw—tall, commanding and elegant, with dark blue eyes, a profusion of curling black hair, glittering white teeth, and a form like Apollo's. Mary was so proud of him! She would always watch his eye when she meditated any little piece of roguery, and it was discontinued or perfected *as she read its language.* He was just the man to appreciate her—to understand her sensitive, enthusiastic nature; to know when to check, when to encourage; and it needed but *a word, a look*; for her *whole soul* went out to him.

"And so the bright summer days sped fleetly on; and now autumn had come, with its gorgeous beauty, and no one had courage to speak of

breaking up our happy circle ; but ah ! there came
one, with stealthy steps, *who had no such scruples !*

* * * *

“The merry shout of the children is hushed in the wide halls ; anxious faces are grouped on the piazza ; for in a darkened room above, lies Mary’s princely husband, delirious with fever ! The smile has fled her lip, the rose her cheek ; her eye is humid with tears *that never fall* ; day and night without sleep or food, she keeps untiring vigil ; while (unconscious of her presence,) in tones that pierce her heart, he calls unceasingly for ‘my wife !’ She puts back the tangled masses of dark hair from his heated forehead ; she passes her little hand coaxingly over it ; she hears not the advice of the physician, ‘to procure a nurse.’ She fears not to be alone with him when he is raving. She tells no one that on her delicate breast she bears the impress of an (almost) *deadly* blow from the hand that was never before raised but to *bless her*. And now the physician, who has come *once, twice, thrice* a day from the city, tells the anxious groups in the hall that his patient *must die* ; not one dare break the news to the wretched Mary ! There is little need ! She has gazed in their faces with a keen, agonized earnestness ; she has asked no questions, but she knows it all ; and her heart is

dying within her! No entreaty, no persuasion can draw her from the bedside.

"The old doctor, with tearful eyes, passes his arm round her trembling form, and says, 'My child, you *cannot* meet the *next hour*—leave him with me.'

"A mournful shake of the head is his only answer, as she takes her seat again by her husband, and presses her forehead low, upon that clammy hand; praying God that *she* may die with him.

"An hour of TIME—an ETERNITY of agony has passed! A fainting, unresisting form is borne from that chamber of *Death*.

"Beautiful as a piece of rare sculpture, lies the husband!—no trace of pain on lip or brow; the long, heavy lashes lie upon the marble cheek; the raven locks, damp with the dew of death, cluster profusely round the noble forehead; those chiselled lips are gloriously beautiful in their repose! Tears fall like rain from kindly eyes; servants pass to and fro, respectfully, with measured tread; kind hands are busy with vain attempts to restore animation to the fainting wife. Oh that *bitter*, BITTER waking! (for she *does* wake. God pity her!)

"Her hand is passed slowly across her forehead; she remembers! she is a widow!! She looks

about the room—there is his hat, his coat, his cane; and *now*, indeed, she throws herself, with a burst of passionate grief, into the arms of the old physician, who says, betwixt a tear and a smile, ‘Now God be praised—SHE WEEPS!’”

“And so with the falling leaves of Autumn, ‘the Great Reaper’ gathered in our noble friend. Why should I dwell on the agony of the gentle wife? or tell of her return to her desolate home in the city; of the disposal of the rare pictures and statuary collected to grace its walls by the refined taste of its proprietor; of the NECESSARY disposal of every *article of luxury*; of her removal to plain lodgings, where curious people speculated upon her history, and marked her moistened eyes; of the long, interminable, wretched days; of the wakeful nights, when she lay with her cheek pressed against the sweet, fatherless child of her love; of her untiring efforts to seek an honorable, independent support? It is but an every-day history, but (God knows) its crushing weight of agony is none the less keenly felt by the sufferer!”

V.

THE SECOND MARRIAGE.

FORTUNATELY for the subject of our sketch, her father, though poor, as we have said, hastened to make what provision he could afford for the comfort of the broken family. Nor did Dr. Eldredge turn a deaf ear, or pass by on the other side. Some bitter thoughts were doubtless occasioned, by the remembrance of the luxuries of which she had been so suddenly bereft; it was hard to sink like a star behind the hills of adversity—to pass suddenly from a gay and splendid career into the obscurity of a more common-place and quiet life; and we can excuse the sensitive Fanny for some unreasonable complaints; but, thanks to her own and her husband's father, she had the consolation and treasure of a home—a *home*, which, however modest, was in

every respect comfortable, and not altogether inelegant.

Sarah Eldredge was now in the full flush and vigor of womanhood—and a widow! It is a wise provision of nature which ordains that the most deeply wounded heart shall not always bleed. Hope springs from the ashes of grief. Time buries the dead past, and lifts the curtain from the glowing future. Night comes, that another morning, with all its glory and freshness, may dawn upon the earth. Why then waste the energies of youth in mourning over graves? They will not give up their dead; already the spirit of the lost one looks down upon us from blissful spheres, and says, "Be happy!" to our sorrowing hearts. Such a voice came to the young widow. She called reason and faith to her aid. She saw herself still blooming and attractive; the same inviting world lay all around her; she longed for sympathy, for change, for life. Her first matrimonial venture had proved a happy one; and the memory thereof prompted her to risk another voyage on Wedlock's perilous sea. Thus it might have been the very power of love that bound her to her first husband which threw open the welcoming doors to the advances of a new suitor.

Mr. Farrington, a merchant of Boston—a man of energy and upright character—made an offer of his hand. He had himself enjoyed matrimonial experience—was himself a parent—and was well qualified to sympathize with the young widow. They sought mutual consolation in marriage. But scarce was the honeymoon over, when that mutual consolation was followed by mutual surprise. Fanny learned to her sorrow that all husbands are not equally fond and indulgent; and the bridegroom discovered that Mrs. F. No. 2 wasn't the exact counterpart of Mrs. F. No. 1. The contrast was, in fact, so vast and amazing, that it seemed to require solitude and quiet, to consider it in all its bearings. Accordingly, Mr. Farrington resorted to travel and a change of scene; journeyed westward; and has not since been seen on the down-east slope of the continent. The slender tie of affection between the happy pair, thus long drawn out, like a thread of India rubber, finally snapped.

At the time of his departure, Fanny was boarding with her children at the Marlboro' Hotel in Boston. Soon after, however, she removed to quiet but pleasant lodgings in another quarter of the city.

Mr. Farrington took up his abode in Chicago,

and soon after Fanny was connubially advertised in the columns of the Boston Daily Bee. Then, from the auction mart of a western court, Mr. F. gave out three warnings; cried — “Going! — going!! — gone!!!” and legally knocked down his wife with the hammer of divorce.

Once more separated from her husband, the dashing Fanny wore no mourning weeds. Her lively circle of acquaintances found her fireside no less attractive than formerly. Once more a widow she had learned to wear gracefully her honors.

VI.

FANNY FERN AT HOME.

FANNY FERN'S writings are expressive of her character. But, if possible, she is twice as original, spicy, and entertaining, in her person as in her sketches. To understand her perfectly, one should see her and talk with her; and to see her and talk with her to advantage, one should meet her on terms of chatty familiarity in her own private apartments.

Fanny's home in Boston is well remembered by her favored acquaintances. Introduced into her unique parlor, the visitor found himself surrounded by pleasing evidences of luxury and taste, characterizing its occupant as a woman of elegant leisure. A subdued, monastic light, pervading the apartment, never failed to add its charm to the visit. Convenient shutters, and heavy folds of curtains

robbed the saucy daylight of its too garish beams, and by night, in the still and quiet hours, a rich shade surrounded the glowing globe of the astral, tempering its lustre to a soft, mellow effulgence.

Fanny—as we have hinted—is just like her sketches, only “more so.” Bubbles and flashes might be gathered from her conversation, that would eclipse anything she ever wrote. To have her sit by your side one hour, and—sparkle, (*talk* don’t express the idea,) is worth all the Fern Leaves and Ruth Halls in the world. Witty and pathetic by turns; now running over with fun, and now with tears; always sprightly, always plain and terse in her language, she is sure to entertain you for one hour at least, as no other woman can. She will entertain you another hour, some time, if you choose. But the probability is, you don’t choose. Such women don’t wear well. Their conversations are like “Fern Leaves”—brilliant enough at first, but presently wearisome, and insipid. Consequently they have a great many short acquaintances, but no long ones. Their friends are not fast friends. We doubt if Fanny ever enjoyed an enthusiastic friendship which lasted more than a couple of years.

Fanny’s words are the least of her fascinations. Her manner is that of a consummate actress. And

it is not long before you discover that she is little else than an actress. Her tears are regular stage tears. If she desires to excite your sympathy, she knows better than anybody else, how to do it. She'll improvise a "Ruth Hall" story for you, inventing wrongs and sufferings to fit the occasion, and drop a few ready tears, like hot wax, to seal her testimony,—sometimes sobbing a little, and pressing your hand convulsively, to heighten the effect.

Oh, she can be fascinating as Cleopatra. She knows how to thrill you with an unexpected touch. Then her voice, how artistically tender its modulations, how musically mirthful, how musically sad by turns! Oh, Fanny is a great woman! She should go upon the stage, or institute a new "school of art and design" for the fair sex.

Fanny has an off-hand, dashing way of entertaining company, which we have never seen surpassed. If you are so fortunate as to be a favored visitor, and to find her alone, you may make sure of her, for at least one evening. No matter who calls; the haughty Mr. A., the foppish B., the jealous and frowning C., are all neglected for your sake. "Sit still," says Fanny, "and they'll have sense enough to see they are not wanted, and withdraw." Accordingly, in a little while, out goes A.,

very stiffly. Then B. retires, bowing snobbishly, and making insipid remarks about the weather. Finally comes poor C.'s gruff and lowering "good evening." And Fanny, clapping her hands, and laughing merrily, rejoins you upon the sofa, after shutting the door upon her last visitor—and whispering a consoling word in his ear, behind your back. Oh, matchless, diplomatic Fanny!

Of course the polite Fanny does the agreeable in introducing you to her friends. But she entertains odd ideas about names. Sometimes you are ready to explode in convulsions of mirth, at the delightfully careless manner in which she bestows upon you some comic patronymic, never before heard of in your family history. To-night you are Mr. Pilridge. Last night you figured as Smith. Tomorrow you'll be Jenkins or Jones.

Fanny is consistent, and invents names for all her visitors. You are no exception. Mr. White is introduced to you as Mr. Brown. (Why, indeed, shouldn't a lady take the same liberty with her friends' names as with her own complexion, and just change the color a trifle?) Mr. Webb becomes Mr. Wing—a mere difference of a *pinion*. Mr. Rose is transformed into Mr. Minks,—probably on the principle that a rose by any other name will smell as sweet. In the same

way a Walker is dignified as a Ryder; Dix is expanded into Richards; Rich becomes Poore, and French is translated into English.

Now mistakes will happen in the best regulated families. Some funny ones occur in Fanny's. 'Tisn't so easy a thing to remember all her names. Accordingly, forgetting that you are called Johnson, for this evening, you gravely address Mr. Howard by that name. That gentleman replies, with a knowing smile, that Johnson is *your* name—you laugh, Fanny laughs, and it passes as a good joke. Or, perhaps, the other visitor has also become slightly confused, and readily subscribing to Johnson, bestows Howard upon you, by way of exchange. Or, while passing for Smith, you meet some one who knew you last week as Pilridge.

Another pleasant incident is liable to occur. By a coincidence, you meet at Fanny's some friend whom you astonish into silence. You are similarly astonished; and observing no signs of recognition, Fanny proceeds to introduce you. You can scarcely contain yourself on hearing familiar Bob Peters dubbed as General Budington; and he looks hugely tickled at your appellation of Rev. Mr. Bird.

One additional circumstance we should not fail

to state. You never meet a lady visitor at Fanny's. There appears to be but little affinity between her and her own sex. "Cause unknown," as coroners' verdicts say of "poor deaths" that occur through neglect of the city authorities.

VII.

EARLY LITERARY EFFORTS.

FANNY first appeared before the public, in the columns of the *Olive Branch*, sometimes as "FANNY FERN," and in several instances as "OLIVIA BRANCH." We knew, personally, the good old man, "frosty, yet kindly," who at that time filled the editorial chair of that paper. We remember distinctly his own account of some of their frequent interviews. Like most others who viewed Fanny through the enchanted medium of a not too intimate acquaintance, he was, in some sense, dazzled by her fascinations. Fanny is a regular meteor. You cannot choose but look at her, even if you don't place much faith in a light so erratic and fitful. The bewildered old gentleman felt the touch of those magnetic little fingers upon his shoulder, and looked up, over his spec-

tacles, in absolute bewilderment, at the thing of smiles and tears standing before him.

No wonder that he thought the sensitive, impulsive Fanny must be faultless, and sympathized profoundly in her execrations on hard-hearted parents and tyrannical husbands. No wonder, if defended by such lips, the worse appeared the better reason—and the price per column dwindled into comparative insignificance. Mr. Norris was Fanny's faithful friend. Already tottering toward the grave, he was not, indeed, able to render her as much actual service as the younger and more vigorous editor of *The True Flag*, who was, next to Mr. N., her earliest patron, but the proprietor of the Olive Branch gave her employment, friendship and counsel, which should have secured in return, at least gratitude.

As we have intimated, Fanny had contributed but few articles to the Olive Branch, before forming an engagement with the *Boston True Flag*, and our next chapter will be devoted to a graphic description of her connection with that paper, by its editor.

VIII.

FANNY AND THE TRUE FLAG.

SCENE, TRUE FLAG OFFICE, MORNING.—*Industrious Editor at his desk.*—Enter dapper young gentleman, bowing.—Editor, with a pen over each ear and one in his fingers, looks up, nodding politely.

Young Gent.—Are you in want of contributions to your paper?

Ed.—We are always glad to get good original articles, sir. Please take a seat.

Y. G.—Thank you, sir. (Sits down in a Flag-bottomed chair—we mean, a chair with a pile of True Flags in it.) I am not a writer myself, but I have a lady friend, who, although inexperienced, manifests a good deal of literary talent, and would like to try her hand at an article or two for your paper. She belongs to a distinguished literary

family; her father is an editor, and she has a brother who is also an editor, and the author of several of the most popular books ever published in this country.

Ed.—Very well; we should be pleased to see a specimen of what she can do. (Y. G. withdraws.)

Such was substantially the manner in which the yet unknown authoress, destined soon to become so celebrated, was first introduced to our notice. We should not, however, fail to state, in this connection, that already Mr. Norris, of the Olive Branch, had communicated to a member of our firm the fact, that a sister of Mr. N. P. Willis had applied to him for employment, and that he had recommended the True Flag as an additional source of income. Therefore, without the calling of names, we were prepared to make a shrewd guess at the identity of the young gent's lady friend.

According to agreement, a couple of fragrant Ferns were plucked in due season, (no pun on the word *due*,) and sent to our office. We found the leaves a little coarse in fibre, but spicy, and acceptable. Fanny wrote upon a big foolscap page, in a large, open, very masculine hand. The manuscript was characteristic—decidedly Ferny—dashed all over with astonishing capitals and crazy italics—and stuck full with staggering exclamation

points, as a pin-cushion with pins. In print, the italics were intended to resemble jolly words leaning over and tumbling down with laughter, and the interjections were supposed to be tottering under the two-fold weight of double-entendres and puns. At first sight, the writing looked as though it might have been paced off by trained canary-birds—driven first through puddles of ink, then marched into hieroglyphic drill on the sheet like a militia company on parade. All Fanny's manuscripts demanded a good deal of editorial care to prepare them for the press; her first productions, particularly, requiring as thorough weeding as so many beds of juvenile beets and carrots.

Fanny's price—we mean the price of her articles—was two dollars a column. This was readily acceded to; and the young gent received the money for her first contributions—eight dollars for four columns—the morning after their delivery into our hands. In this place, it would be inexcusable not to speak of another characteristic of the Fern manuscripts. When purchased, paid for, properly pruned and prepared for the printer's hands, they were invariably found to fall short of the stipulated amount of reading matter—one of her spread-eagle pages nestling very quietly and nicely into a few lines of print. So trifling a cir-

cumstance, however, was not, of course, to be considered, in dealing with a lady.

ANOTHER SCENE. TRUE FLAG OFFICE, TEN O'CLOCK, A. M. *Editor at his desk, with pens as before, and an additional pencil in his hair.*—Enter jaunty bonnet, with gay feathers, elegant veil, rich broadcloth cloak, and silk dress—rather magnificent, if not more so. Editor hastens to place a chair.

Jaunty Bonnet, (in a low, half-whisper, under the veil)—Excuse me—I'm a little out of breath, running up stairs. I've brought Mr. Snooks to introduce me.

Mr. Snooks turned out to be a Fern manuscript. The jaunty bonnet carried him in an elegant reticule, in close proximity to a coquettish handkerchief, redolent of perfume. The jaunty bonnet turned out to be—Fanny herself! Mr. Snooks was for sale, and we bought him. Price, two dollars a column—cheap enough for Snooks. We afterwards dotted his *i's*, dressed him up a little, changed his name—Snooks was a bad name—and printed him.

This was our first interview with the witty and brilliant Fanny. Certainly, we did not judge that so gay and fashionable an attire had that morning

issued from a dismal garret, in a dark and narrow lane—that those well-rounded proportions drew their sole subsistence from the “homœopathic broth” of niggardly landladies. Indeed, no starving necessity had compelled her to resort to the pen. With a true woman’s spirit, she believed she could do something for herself, and determined to try. We liked her articles—she liked our pay—so we engaged her as a regular contributor. We suggested that she should write stories, in addition to her sketches—by which arrangement she might easily earn fifteen dollars a week. She pleaded the necessity of finishing everything she undertook, at one sitting, and her inability to elaborate a long story. Still she desired more employment; at the same time, the too-frequent repetition of “Fanny Fern” in our columns would injure both herself and us; so the matter was compromised by giving her a second *nom de plume*—that of “Olivia,”—which was attached to a number of her sketches.

Up to this period, Mrs. Farrington had no reputation whatever as a writer, and we purchased her articles for their intrinsic merits only, paying for them what they were actually worth to us. As her reputation increased, and her value as a contributor was heightened, her remuneration was augmented accordingly. Although we paid her five

dollars a column,—the columns generally falling short one-third, at that,—we cheerfully gave her her own terms, until, when she demanded twelve dollars a column, we thought we would just take three or four days to scratch our editorial ear, and think about it. In this place, it may be proper to state that, at one time, without giving us any notice whatever, she broke her engagement, and entered into a contract with a New York publisher, by which she was to write exclusively for his paper for one year. The terms offered were liberal, and for her sake, we rejoiced at her good future. But munificent promises do not always lead to rich fulfilment; and it was not long before Mrs. Farrington gladly returned to those in whose service she had always been promptly and handsomely paid.

Fanny's style was novel and sparkling, if not very refined, and her fame sprang up almost in a night-time. Messrs. Derby & Miller, booksellers, of Auburn, N. Y., had the shrewdness to see that a volume of her sketches would be apt to make a stir in the market, and wrote to us for information touching her real name and address. We replied that we were not then at liberty to divulge the name, but that any communications directed to our care would reach her. A correspondence was at once opened, and Mrs. Farrington was offered four

hundred dollars for sufficient material for a volume—or, if she preferred, ten cents a copy on every edition printed.

Now four hundred dollars cash, was tempting. It would purchase a rich dress, a dashing shawl, "several pairs of gaiter-boots," and numerous boxes of those sovereign preparations, noted for the qualities that "impart a natural beauty to the complexion." In accordance with our advice, however, (for we foresaw a large sale for the book,) she resolved to risk a little, in the hope that much might be gained, and accept the commission of ten cents a copy. The volume was easily thrown together, being compiled principally from the files of the Olive Branch and the True Flag. It was stereotyped at the New-England Foundry, in this city, and all the proof-sheets passed through our hands.

At this time, Mrs. Farrington and her youngest child, "little Ella," boarded with a respectable family, in the spacious brick dwelling-house, No. 642 Washington-street; her eldest daughter residing with her grandfather Eldredge. Fanny occupied an elegant suite of rooms on the second floor. The parlor was sumptuously furnished; chairs of solid mahogany, covered with velvet—with centre-table, sofa, carpet, &c., of correspond-

ing richness. The numerous visitors had no reason to suspect that all these luxuries were only poverty in disguise. Nor would one readily imagine that the plump Ella and her blooming mother were accustomed to breakfast on shadowy dishes of hope, have the same served up, cold, for dinner, and then go supperless to bed. The landlady had an excellent reputation for liberality and kindness, and looked like anything but the cruel ogress represented in Fanny's writings. The fact is — whatever may be said to the contrary by Fanny and her especial sympathizers, — she was at this time living in a style of luxury and elegance which would have reflected no discredit upon any lady of fashion. There may be some good reason for concealing this suggestive fact, but we cannot discover any.

"Fern Leaves, from Fanny's Portfolio"—the last part of the title originated with ourselves, and was adopted by Fanny—finally made its appearance. She was fortunate in her publishers. Never was book advertised so lavishly. No expense of time, money, or tact, was spared, to create a sensation and great sales. The result is known; Fanny had occasion to thank us for our counsel; her commission amounted to several thousand dollars. Flushed with success, she

moved from our sober, puritanic town, to the gay metropolis of New-York. But such reputations are short-lived. "Little Ferns" followed, and met with but a moderate sale. A second series of Leaves was then published—but "oh, what a falling off was there!" The demand for the book was quite limited.

IX.

FANNY FERN IN CHURCH.

DURING Fanny Fern's residence in Boston she was a regular attendant at the Park-street (Orthodox) church. Undoubtedly this circumstance arose from a strong sentiment of natural affection. Not being on particularly intimate terms with her family, it was without doubt a great pleasure to catch such stray glimpses of their well-known faces as might be obtained under the lofty dome of their favorite church.

It must have been by accident that she strayed away, one Sunday, from the well-beaten Calvinistic path into the new Music Hall, to listen to the eloquence of Theodore Parker. We regret, however, that she labored under a misconception with regard to the character of this church. Meting out justice to all, we must admit that it

is the most democratic place of the kind in Boston. Black and white, rich or poor, alike are welcome. The seats are free, in pursuance of the old adage, "first come, first served." Not here, as in too many of our churches, is the Christian gospel, "Son, give me thy heart," perverted by the man with the black velvet bag into "Son, give me thy cash!" The contribution box, that terror to church-goers, is very rarely encountered, the expenses being defrayed by voluntary yearly subscriptions. But Fanny, regardless of these facts, must be held responsible for the sketch which follows:—

"Do you call *this* a church? Well, I heard a *prima dona* here a few nights ago; and bright eyes sparkled, and waving ringlets kept time to moving fans; and opera-glasses and ogling, and fashion and folly reigned for the nonce triumphant. *I* can't forget it; I can't get up any devotion *here*, under these latticed balconies, with their fashionable freight. Now if it was a good old country church, with a cracked bell and unhewn rafters, a pine pulpit, with the honest sun staring in through the windows, a pitch-pipe in the gallery, and a few hob-nailed rustics scattered round in the uncushioned seats, I should feel all right;

but my soul is in fetters here; it won't soar—its wings are earth-clipped. Things are all too fine! Nobody can come in at that door, whose hat and coat and bonnet are not fashionably cut. The poor man (minus a Sunday suit)-might lean on his staff in the porch, a long while, before he'd dare venture in, to pick up *his* crumb of the Bread of Life. But, thank God, the unspoken prayer of penitence may wing its way to the Eternal Throne, though our mocking church-spires point only with *aristocratic fingers* to the *rich man's heaven*.

"That hymn was beautifully read; there's poetry in the preacher's soul. Now he takes his seat by the reading-desk; now he crosses the platform, and offers his hymn-book to a female who has just entered. What right has *he* to know there was a woman in the house? Let the bonnets find their own hymns—'tisn't clerical!

"Well, I take a listening attitude, and try to believe I am in church. I hear a great many original, a great many *startling* things said. I see the gauntlet thrown at the dear old orthodox Calvinistic sentiments which I nursed in, with my mother's milk, and which (please God) I'll cling to till I die. I see the polished blade of satire glittering in the air, followed by curious, eager, youthful eyes,

which gladly see the searching 'Sword of the Spirit' parried. Meaning glances—smothered smiles, and approving nods, follow the witty clerical sally. The author pauses to mark the effect, and his face says—That stroke *tells!* and so it did, for 'the Athenians' are not all dead, who 'love to see and hear some new thing.' But he has another arrow in his quiver. How his features soften—his voice is low and thrilling, his imagery beautiful and touching. He speaks of human love; he touches skilfully a chord to which every heart vibrates; and stern manhood is struggling with his tears, ere his smiles are chased away.

"Oh, there's intellect there—there's poetry there—there's genius there; but I remember Gethsemane—I forget not Cavalry! I know the 'rocks were rent' and the 'heavens darkened,' and 'the stone rolled away;' and a cold chill strikes to my heart when I hear 'Jesus of Nazareth' lightly mentioned.

"Oh, what are intellect, and poetry, and genius, when with Jewish voice they cry, '*Away with HIM!*'"

"'With Mary,' let me 'bathe his feet with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head.'

"And so, I 'went away sorrowful,' that this human teacher, with such great intellectual possessions, should yet 'lack the *one thing needful.*'"

X.

FANNY FERN IN BROADWAY.

HA! there she comes, Ned!" says Mr. Augustus Smallcane, lounging on the arm of his friend.

"Mag-nif-i-cent!" drawls Mr. Tapwit, putting his glass in his eye. "What a bust!"

"Isn't that a gait, Ned!"

"It's a-door-able!"

Mr. Tapwit chuckled, to let Mr. Smallcane see that a pun was intended. Mr. Smallcane recognized it with an "O, don't now, Ned!"

"Won't we have a splendid sight at her?" exclaimed Mr. Tapwit. "Crowd this way. What a figure!"

"What a foot!" adds Smallcane.

And the gentlemen continue to stare and make remarks while the lady passes.

Does she care? She looks as if she liked it! She is none of your feeble, timid, common-place women. She "goes in" for sensation and effect—which few know so well how to produce.

Fanny Fern—there! we didn't mean to let the secret out; but it is Fanny we mean—is a full, commanding woman. She looks high, steps high, and carries her head high. She has light brown hair, florid complexion, and large, blue eyes. When she appears in company, her color verges upon the rosy. If you talk with her in broad daylight, she has a trick of dropping her veil, to prevent a too close scrutiny of her features. When her veil is up, you can see that she has a luscious cheek, large nose, slightly aquiline, mouth of character, if not of beauty, and a vigorous chin. Fanny isn't handsome, and never was. But she has a splendid form, a charming foot and ankle, a fascinating expression, and the manners of a queen.

Dress and equipage are not the least part of Fanny. She is as dependent upon these as a peacock upon his tail. She wears black because it becomes her better than any other color. A widow of forty—fair—in mourning—how interesting! Her magnificent, sweeping flounces occupy the space of any five ordinary, uninflated females. She moves with a great rustle and swell, majestic.

She is preceded by her eldest daughter, already a young lady, as a sort of armor-bearer. Her youngest child, "Ella," follows sprucely at her heels, like a page. And so, up and down Broadway, sails Fanny Fern, proud, haughty, ambitious, scorned by some, admired by many—loved by few.

XI.

FANNY AT THE TREMONT HOUSE.

GOOD John Walter is Fanny's man-at-arms. He is the last and most faithful of her servants. She needs some person in that capacity, and shrewdly manages never to be without such a champion. She was fortunate, after many trials, in falling upon so choice an acquisition as John Walter.

Fanny cannot be accused of choosing her champion from any such motive as personal beauty. John isn't alarmingly handsome—not half so beautiful as he is good. Of tall and gaunt figure, with a lean-and-hungry-Cassius look, bran-like eyes, an oyster-like open to his mouth, fiery hair, an incendiary whisker, a windy manner of talking, and a gaseous atmosphere pervading his person generally—oh, no! Fanny couldn't have chosen John for his beauty.

John's championship never shone with more dazzling lustre, than on his visit to Boston, in her train, last summer. He came like the very Napoleon of snobs. Boston was to be taken by storm. "The three-hilled city," said John, "shall bow down at our coming." "John," answered Fanny, "I regard you as a prophet. You are a man of sense. The three hills shall bow down."

They fortified themselves in the Sebastopol of the Tremont House,—that stronghold so formidable to turkey,—and sent forth their proclamations. But, somehow, there was no movement of the three-hilled city. Not a block trembled. Not a brick stirred. Fanny began to chafe. In vain she searched the columns of the daily papers, to find complimentary notices of her arrival. Not a word on the subject. She, who expected a triumph equal to Jenny Lind's, found herself of no more account in the three-hilled city, whose duty it was to bow down, than the wife of John Smith, the joiner, who went on at the same time to hunt up a second cousin.

Meanwhile good John Walter exerted himself. In his windiest manner, he thrust that lank figure of his into every nook and corner, where he hoped to generate a little interest in his famous *protégée*.

"She's come!" whispered John mysteriously, in the ear of an influential editor.

"Ha!" said the editor, "has she?" and went on with his writing.

"She is at the Tremont House," resumed John, with an air of vast importance, "where she receives her friends. The rush to see her is very great, and we have to resort to every means to keep the multitude at bay. You, of course, would be a privileged one, and I should be happy to introduce you."

"Thank you," said the editor, as he dipped his pen.

"Do you know,"—John began to bluster—"there are vipers in human form, in this city, who have dared to sting that woman's reputation?"

"I know nothing of the kind," replied the editor.

"You ought to know it; and I am authorized to say this: Fanny expects her friends to vindicate her character, and crush these vipers. There is that rascal, Mr. Blank——"

"Mr. Blank is a friend of mine, sir."

"But"—John waxed bombastic—"You cannot be a friend of his and a friend of Fanny Fern's!"

He said, in his paper, that she has a husband living——”

“Which is true, I believe,” remarked the editor, quietly.

“But sir”—here John choked—“she is a *woman*, and no *gentleman* will make remarks of the kind about a WOMAN,—a woman, sir, is sacred; and Fanny Fern is one of the noblest of her sex. From your character as an editor and a man, I had every reason to believe that you would not hesitate to espouse her cause——”

“Mr. Walter,” interrupted the editor, “your assumption is somewhat astounding, but it has not quite taken away my breath—I have still a modest word to say. I do not see that it is my duty to go and cudgel Mr. Blank, nor do I consider the inducement you hold out, quite sufficient to authorize me to engage in any quarrels except my own. I will not trouble you to introduce me to Miss Fern. I wish you a good morning, sir!”

John varied his manner with different people. To some he was insinuating and smooth; to others, bluff and lowering; but all his efforts were unsuccessful. Nobody would go and whip Mr. Blank; nobody cared much about meeting Fanny Fern. And here let us not be misunderstood. It was no fault of John's, that he did not succeed. He was

zealous to the last degree. Still less was it Fanny's fault. She was, as he expressed it, "the noblest of her sex." The truth is,—and to the shame of that city be it spoken,—there was no Don Quixote in Boston! If Boston could have boasted of so much chivalry, Mr. Blank would have been cudgelled, and Fanny avenged.

Having utterly failed to create any kind of a sensation;—having waited in vain to "receive friends" at the Tremont,—it was judged expedient to make a grand sally upon the town. An open barouche was accordingly ordered, and Fanny, richly attired, and attended by noble John Walter, rode ostentatiously through the streets. A kind of sensation was produced,—but not the right kind. People looked, and laughed, and winked. Some said, "Lucky John Walter!" Others, who knew Fanny, said, "Poor John Walter!" Still Fanny was let alone; nobody troubled her; the world turned round, and Boston turned with it, the same; and Mr. Blank remains uncudged to this day.

And so Fanny and the redoubtable John made haste to evacuate their Sebastopol, withdrawing their forces quietly, and returned, inglorious, to New York.

XII.

A KEY TO "RUTH HALL."

FANNY FERN'S latest literary effort is the production of a novel entitled "Ruth Hall." Much curiosity has been excited in the minds of the public as to the originals of her various portraitures. It will be fully satisfied by the perusal of the following criticism from the pen of an able reviewer.

"Wouldn't I call things by their right names? Would I praise a book because a woman wrote it?"—*Ruth Hall*, p. 307.

"We have called Fanny Fern a literary star. We should qualify the expression. There is no clear, strong lustre, no steady splendor, no mild, benignant twinkle, to Fanny. She flashed into our sky like a meteor, seemingly larger than Jupiter, and for the moment more ruddy than Venus,

more flaming than any planet or fixed star. Or perhaps we should liken her to a rocket—going up with a great rush and whiz, then paling, dying, falling, and finishing up with a loud, angry pop, and a sudden shower of little fiery tadpoles, dropping on the head of her enemies.

"The 'loud, angry pop' came with the publication of her last work, 'Ruth Hall,'—a book that appears to have been exploded in a fit of desperation, to revive the writer's sinking fame, and to revenge herself on her relatives, and everybody she imagines ever injured her. Fortunately, the rockets' fiery droppings are harmless as moonbeams, and there is little but hiss, and whiz, and crack, to its anger;—else some very respectable families had been blown to atoms, and entirely devoured and eaten up forever by the fiery tadpoles.

"How we used to admire Fanny! We never, indeed, saw much to love in her writings, but the snap, and vigor, and originality of her style, was truly refreshing. We could never sufficiently praise these qualities in her early sketches. Her power was partly owing to native genius, partly to the circumstances of her life. She was a full-grown woman when she began to write. The age of feeble sentimentalism was passed. She had

seen the world; enjoyed society; known adversity. She had been twice a wife, and twice a mother; had lost one husband by death, and another by—no matter what. In years she was forty; in experience at least a hundred and forty. And all this life and knowledge she had kept bottled up, like old wine. How it sparkled and foamed when the wires were cut and the cork blown out! She poured off those first sketches, bubbling, frothing, effervescing, like prime champagne newly opened. Wine of this quality soon deadens; but Fanny kept pouring out, determined to make up in quantity what was wanting in flavor; and now—in ‘Ruth Hall’—she has squeezed the bottle and flung it at the heads of the public.

“Speaking of this queer book, the New York Courier says, ‘If the writer ever showed the manuscript to her friends, they acted most cruelly towards her, in not advising her to throw it into the fire.’ We think so too. We have never seen so sad a revelation of a woman’s heart. There are some flashes of genius in the book, but there are more flashes of that unmentionable fire, supposed to be familiar to wicked souls.

“The principal characters in Ruth Hall bristle all over with iron spikes of selfishness and cruelty. The able critic of the Boston Post declares that

'art would never admit such stony-hearted monsters in a story of real life.' Now, 'Ruth Hall' is understood to be an autobiography. That it was intended as such by the writer, there can be no doubt in the mind of any person who knows her and reads her book. Following this view of the subject, we have, first and foremost among the monsters, Fanny's own father. He is the 'old Ellet' of the story—a man who 'thinks more of one cent than of any child he ever had;' who coldly leaves his daughter and grandchildren to suffer almost the extremes of want and privation; who would not, indeed, throw them a crumb, were it not that, as a church-member, he has a 'Christian reputation to sustain,' and fears public opinion. The caricature is gross and awful. Yet it is not even a caricature. Fanny (Ruth Hall) has daubed the hideous picture of an impossible character, and scrawled beneath it the angry words, 'This is my father! let all the world see and abhor him!' O, Goneril! O, Regan! could woman's hate do more? Oh, dear and sweet revenge upon a parent! because, forsooth, the white-haired old man, who, even now, totters daily up his office stairs to earn a livelihood, possessed too much calm wisdom to impoverish himself in order that she might sit a queen—because he deemed it sufficient, in all love and jus-

tice, to support her comfortably, as his means afforded—because her own indiscretions, and extravagant and unreasonable demands, had called down upon her head deserved severity and reproof—this is the fire kindled in her heart! We are sorry to speak in this strain. But if we speak at all, we must utter what justice and truth call out of us. Even were Mrs. Farrington's charges against her father well-founded, we could not but cry out in condemnation of the parricidal spirit that seeks so devilish a revenge.

“Her first husband's father, the late Dr. Eldredge, meets with a similar treatment. The grave that has closed over him could not shield his breast from the tearing claws of the vampire of vengeance. He figures as Dr. Hall—just such another unfeeling, unnatural, impossible monster, as the old man Ellet. Mrs. Hall (Fanny's mother-in-law, Mrs. Eldredge,) is a slice from the same raw material, with the addition of a little feminine salt and pepper. Fanny had an opportunity to write something of her own spirit in ‘Mrs. Hall’—thus relieving the deadness of the character with occasional sparks of real human nature.

“Mr. N. P. Willis appears in the book as Mr. Hyacinth Ellet—‘a mincing, conceited, tip-toeing, be-curled, be-perfumed popinjay.’ Like the other

monsters, he has not a grain of heart in his composition. Such a burlesque of a gentleman so well known for his fine qualities of heart and mind as Mr. N. P. Willis, is simply disgusting. It is too coarse and flat to be tolerated even in a farce.

"Other monsters in the book may be briefly alluded to. The Millets are the——s, —represented as horrid people, of course, being so unfortunate as to be related to Fanny. Mr. Lescom, editor of the 'Standard,' is the late Mr. Norris, of the Olive Branch. The True Flag is personified as 'Mr. Tibbets.'

"Now with regard to the angels in the book. First, of course, is Fanny herself. She is 'Ruth Hall'—a perfect celestial. We are surprised that any person, whose judgment was not altogether swallowed up in vanity and egotism, should have made so bald and sickening an attempt at self-exaltation. Ruth is a model wife, a model mother, a model widow, a model saint. She is very beautiful, and a great genius. There was never a woman on earth until Ruth was let down out of heaven. What a capital joke, that so rare a creation should have been born the daughter of old Ellet, and the sister of Hyacinth!

"'Harry Hall' is the name given to Fanny's

first husband. It is a singular fact, by the way, that no allusion is made to her second marriage. Why is Mrs. Farrington so anxious to suppress the fact, and the subject of her divorce? She should not have neglected so good an opportunity to give Mr. F., what in the vulgar idiom is termed 'fits.'

"Mr. Horace Gates, Hyacinth's assistant, on the 'Irving Magazine,' is Mr. J. Parton, late of the Home Journal. Mr. Parton has recently written a book for Fanny's new publishers, so she thought proper to puff him. Mr. P. is a talented writer, and may, for aught we know, be an excellent man; but he is unfortunate in sitting for the portrait of Mr. Horace Gates. We should prefer anything rather than praise from such a quarter.

But of all the overdone specimens of goodness, the character of virtuous John Walter is the most ridiculous to those who know the original. John Walter is—laugh, ye gods! and hold your sides!—is—but we will spare the poor man's blushes. This pure and fragrant gentleman—who, by the way, never knew Fanny until after the establishment of her reputation, and her contract with Derby & Miller, for the publication of 'Fern Leaves'—has since devoted himself to her service, contented to lick what crumbs may

fall to him from her table, as a reward for his brave championship. He 'puts through' the newspaper puffing which heralds her books, acting as her counsellor, companion, and gentleman friend generally—and so she makes an angel of him out of gratitude. Delicious John Walter!

"The story of Ruth Hall is nothing. There is no plot whatever; no thread of interest to hold one to its pages. There are some spicy, quite Ferny sketches, in the first half of the volume—but the rest is all chaff, filled in to swell the covers to a respectable capaciousness. Towards the close, for want of better matter, we are surfeited with letters from people nobody cares anything about, and a tedious phrenological examination, designed to set off the transcendent mental, moral and affectional qualities of that heavenly creature, Ruth—alias Fanny!

"The book abounds with horrors of cruelty and neglect—which all who are aware in what style Mrs. Farrington used to live, know to be false—until we come to the introduction of good John Walter, when everybody commences laughing. Indeed, such expressions as 'said Ruth, laughing,' 'said Mr. Walter, laughing,' 'said Katy, laughing,' 'said Ruth, beginning to laugh,' occur *ad nauseam*. Sometimes we have 'said Ruth, smi-

ling,' which amounts to the same thing. And so the book draws to a verbose and feeble close. We are glad to have shut it up, never to open it again. We love not these bad-hearted books. Let us then hasten to take leave of this one, and of Fanny-Fern, forever. It was no agreeable task we had to do, but we have done it conscientiously and faithfully; and here let it end."

XIII.

A WORD ABOUT N. P. WILLIS.

OF the command, "Honor thy father and mother," says the Boston Transcript, *Ruth Hall* has been a significant reminder, to those who know the excellent man vilified in that novel as the heroine's father, and admitted in many ways to be intended by "Fanny Fern" as a picture of her own father, Mr. Willis. How differently he is looked upon by his other children it is a relief to humanity to know, and we are glad to be able to copy from the "Youth's Companion," the paper which Mr. Willis publishes in his declining years, the following lines addressed to him by his son, N. P. Willis, the brother of "Fanny Fern."

TO MY AGED FATHER.

[ON HEARING OF HIS RECENT CALAMITY, IN HAVING HIS OFFICE DESTROYED
BY THE LATE FIRE IN SCHOOL-STREET.]

BY N. P. WILLIS.

Cares thicken round thee as thy steps grow slow,
Father beloved!—not turn'd upon, as once,
And battled back with steadfastness unmov'd—
(That battle without fame or trump to cheer—
That hardest battle of the world—*with care*—
Thy life one patient victory till now!)
Faint has thy heart become. For peace thou prayest—
For less to suffer as thy strength grows less.
For, oh, when life has been a stormy wild—
The bitter night too long, the way too far—
The aged pilgrim, ere he lays him down,
Prays for a moment's lulling of the blast—
A little time, to wind his cloak about him,
And smooth his gray hairs decently to die.

Yet, oh, not vain the victories unsung!
Not vain a life of industry to bless.
And thou, in angel-history—where shine
The *silent self-forgetful who toil on*
For others until death—art nam'd in gold.
In heaven it is known, thou hast done well!
But, not all unacknowledg'd is it, here.
Children thou hast, who, for free nurture, given
With one hand, while the other fought thy cares,
Grow grateful as their own hands try the fight.
And more—they thank thee more! The name thou leavest
Spotless and blameless as it comes from thee—
For this—their pure inheritance—a life
Of unstained honor gone before our own—

The father that we love an "honest man"—
For this, thy children bless thee.

Cheer thee, then !—

Though hopelessly thy strength may seem to fail,
And pitilessly far thy cares pursue !

What though the clouds follow to eventide,
Which chased thy morn and noon across the sky !
From these thy trying hours—the hours when strength,
Most sorely press'd, has won its victories—
From *life's dark trial clouds*, that follow on,
Even to sunset—glory comes at last !

Clouds are the glory of the dying day—
A glory that, though welcoming to Heaven,
Illumes the parting hour ere day is gone !

XIV.

IDEAS ABOUT BABIES.

FANNY'S sentiments on this subject are decidedly contradictory. If one were to read any two of her articles, without a definite knowledge of her circumstances, they would be at a loss to determine whether she is maid or matron. The language of the first article which we shall quote is certainly very *anti*-motherly.

"FOLLY—For girls to expect to be happy without marriage. Every woman was made for a mother, consequently, babies are as necessary to their 'peace of mind,' as health. If you wish to look at melancholy and indigestion, look at an old maid. If you would take a peep at sunshine, look in the face of a young mother."

"Now I *won't stand that!* I'm an old maid myself; and I'm neither melancholy nor indigestible! My '*PIECE of mind*' I'm going to give you, (in a minute!) and I never want to *touch* a baby except

with a *pair of tongs* ! 'Young mothers and sunshine !' Worn to fiddle-strings before they are twenty-five ! When an old lover turns up he thinks he sees his grandmother, instead of the dear little Mary who used to make him feel as if he should crawl out of the toes of his boots ! Yes ! my mind is *quite* made up about *matrimony* ; but as to the '*babies*,' (sometimes I think, and then again I don't know !) but on *the whole* I believe I consider 'em a d——ecided humbug ! It's a *one-sided* partnership, this marriage ! the *wife casts up all the accounts* !

" 'Husband' gets up in the morning and pays his '*devours*' to the looking-glass ; curls his fine head of hair ; puts on an immaculate shirt-bosom ; ties an excruciating cravat ; sprinkles his handkerchief with cologne ; stows away a French roll, an egg, and a cup of coffee ; gets into the omnibus, looks *slantendicular* at the pretty girls, and makes love between the pauses of business during the forenoon *generally*. Wife must 'hermetically seal' the windows and exclude all the fresh air, (because the baby had the '*snuffles*' in the night ;) and sits gasping down to the table more dead than alive, to finish her breakfast. Tommy turns a cup of hot coffee down his bosom ; Juliana has torn off the string of her school-bonnet ; James

'wants his geography covered;' Eliza can't find her satchel; the butcher wants to know if she'd like a joint of mutton; the milkman would like his money; the ice man wants to speak to her 'just a minute;' the baby swallows a bean; husband sends the boy home from the store to say *his partner* will dine with him; the cook leaves 'all flying,' to go to her 'sister's dead baby's wake,' and husband's thin coat must be ironed before noon. '*Sunshine and young mothers!!*' Where's my smelling-bottle?"

To the foregoing denunciation of the infant-angels, the following defence furnishes quite a decided contrast.

"Baby-carts on narrow side-walks are awful bores, especially to a hurried business man."

"*Are they?* Suppose you, and a certain pair of blue eyes, that you would give half your patrimony to win, were *joint proprietors* of that baby! I shouldn't dare to stand *very near* you, and call it 'a nuisance.' It's all very well for bachelors to turn up their *single blessed* noses at these little dimpled Cupids; but just wait till *their* time comes! See 'em, the minute their name is written 'Papa,' pull up their dickies, and strut off down street,

as if the Commonwealth owed them a pension ! When they enter the office, see their old married partner (to whom babies have long since ceased to be a novelty) laugh in his sleeve at the new-fledged dignity with which *that* baby's advent is announced ! How perfectly astonished they feel that they should have been so infatuated as not to perceive that a man is a *perfect cypher* till he is at the head of a family ! How frequently one may see them now, looking in at the shop windows, with intense interest, at little hats, coral and bells, and baby-jumpers. How they love to come home to dinner, and press that little velvet cheek to their *business faces* ! Was there ever music *half* so sweet to their ear, as its *first lisped* 'Papa' ? Oh, how closely and imperceptibly, one by one, that little plant winds its tendrils round the parent stem ! How anxiously they hang over its cradle when the cheek flushes and the lip is fever-parched ; and how wide, and deep, and long a shadow in their happy homes, its *little grave* would cast !

"My DEAR sir, depend upon it, *one's own baby is never 'a nuisance.'* Love heralds its birth."

It's just possible though, that Fanny may be actuated by a spirit of sheer contradiction ; for,

happening in some of her readings, to come across Tupper's declaration, that

"A babe in the house is a well-spring of pleasure,"

she takes up the gauntlet, and holds forth in the following vigorous style:—

"Now, Mr. Tupper, allow me to ask you, did you ever *own* a baby? I *meant* to say, did you ever *have* one? Because I knew a woman *once* that *had*; and shall use the privilege of an American '*star and stripe*' female, to tell you that *that* English sentiment of yours, *won't pass this side the water*!

"Ain't we a LITTLE the smartest people on the face of the earth? and if any country *could* grow decent babies, wouldn't it be *America*? Yes, SIR! but I tell you, it's my solemn conviction that they are nothing more nor less than a '*well-spring*' of *botheration*, wherever they are raised. Don't I know? Didn't that shapeless, flimsy, flappy little nuisance I allude to, rule the house from garret to cellar before it was a month old? Wasn't it entirely at *its* option, whether the mother dined at 2 o'clock at noon, or 2 at night? In fact, whether she dined at all? Didn't the little wretch keep its lack-lustre eyes fixed on her, and the minute she turned her back upon it and moved towards the

door, contrive to poke one eye half out with its fist, or get its toes twisted into a knot, or some such infantile stratagem to attract attention? Didn't it know, by *instinct*, whenever she had an invitation to ride, or walk, or visit? and get up a fit of sham distress to knock it all in the head? Didn't she throw away dozens of pairs of good shoes because they creaked? Did she *ever* know what she was to be allowed to do the next minute?

" ' *Well-spring of pleasure!* ' Ha! ha! Ask her husband, Tom! Didn't he have to emigrate up two flights of stairs because it screeched so incessantly nights, that it unfitted him for business next day? He's *very* fond of babies; HE is!

" Well, Mr. Tupper, we won't mention creeping time—when skeins of yarn, and pins, and darning needles are swallowed, with a horrifying ravenousness suggestive of a 'stomach pump;' or its first essays at walking, when it navigates the carpet like a sailor fresh from 'board ship;' raising bumps never marked down on any phrenological chart! or clutching at the corner of the tablecloth, dragging off inkstands, vases, annuals, and '*Proverbial Philosophy*,' with an edifying promiscuousness! Then, making for the open door, and taking a 'flying leap' down two pairs of stairs, to the astonishment of John, Betty and Sally!

"Now, Mr. Martin Farquhar Tupper, 'philosophize' as beautifully as *only you know how*, but *take an American woman's advice*, and don't mention babies! unless you'll sketch from *life* as *I* do! You needn't stand up for *English babies*; they're *all alike*, from Queen Victoria's DOWN to Mike O'Flaherty's, or UP to American babies!

"I'm astonished at you, Mr. Tupper! a *poet*, and a HANDSOME poet, too!! I'm surprised, *I am!*"

XV.

PRAISE FROM A WOMAN.

FANNY always *was* grateful. This well-known fact is humorously exemplified in the following article, referring to Mrs. H. Marion Stephens. This lady, in her "Town-Talk," for the Boston Times, made a few graceful allusions to Fanny's wit and genius, and this friendly tribute gave birth to

"MISS FANNY FIDDLESTICK'S SOLILOQUY,

"ON READING A COMPLIMENTARY NOTICE OF HERSELF, BY A LADY.

"Praise from a woman! What did I ever do to *injure her*, I'd like to know? *There's something behind that!* If she had abused me now, I should have been as placid as an oyster. Here, pussy, come taste this cup of tea for me; I'll give you ten minutes to repent of all your feline flirtations, on that back shed, with *promiskus* Grimalkins; for

ten to one you'll keel over in a fit as soon as you've swallowed it. I don't touch it till I know whether it's poisoned or not. There's more cats than Ferns in the world, and complimentary notices from a female woman look suspicious. I shall be up and dressed, now I tell you. There's a bundle just come in. When I open it *alone*, I guess you'll know it; I've heard of infernal machines before to-day. I don't touch it off without a minister and Marshal Tukey, I promise you. Praise from a woman! Oh, this Fanny isn't verdant, if she is a Fern! There's something behind it! When a woman pats you with one hand you may be morally certain she's going to scratch you with the other. Here;—hands off! clear the track of all petticoats! I'm going to the pistol gallery to take lessons in shooting. That complimentary notice is the *fore end of a runner* of something."

XVI.

THE REMARKABLE HISTORY OF JEMMY JESSAMY.

JEMMY JESSAMY," writes Fanny Fern, "was a double-distilled old bachelor. He had occupied the same quarters at — Hotel for five-and-twenty years. The chamber-maid that 'cleared up' No. 25, dared not, at the price of her scalp, misplace a boot or a tooth-brush. If his breakfast was brought up five minutes before the time, it was ordered down again—and woe to the luckless waiter who brought him hot water when he spoke for cold, or failed to transmit, with telegraphic speed, any card or parcel left at the bar. The first thing *he* knew he didn't know *nothing*. In other words, Jemmy saved him the trouble of going down stairs, by landing him, 'on his own hook,' (nolens volens) in the lower entry.

"Jemmy took two or three hours to *make himself*

up in the morning, emerging from his shell at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, a perfect Beau Brummell. The most fastidious taste could detect no flaw; the most critical or censorious eye no foppery. His figure was matchless, or his tailor, or both together; and his coats always of a shade of color unattainable by any one but Jemmy. Last, not least, he rejoiced in a set of dickies that left him at perfect liberty to look east, west, north or south, without cutting his ears off! He never appeared in public, 'en dishabille,' either of body or mind. Both were, at such times, in their holiday suit.

"Now it was very selfish in Jemmy to 'waste his sweetness on the desert air,' for so many years; but he had two good reasons for it. The first was that he considered himself too bright a jewel to be in the possession of any one woman exclusively. The next was, he was terribly afraid of being taken in. He never made a call on a *single* woman without taking some male acquaintance (not too attractive) to neutralize the force of the compliment. A bright eye or a pretty ankle gave him spasms. He couldn't live away from their owners, and he was afraid to go too near them.

He was most at his ease in a large family of sisters, where he could sprinkle about his attentions

and gallantries in homœopathic doses; or in the society of married ladies, where a man stands in no fear of being asked "*his intentions*."

Susy — was the bright, particular star in *this* firmament. She was always in choice spirits, sparkling as a bottle of champagne, well-dressed, good-tempered, always ready for a drive, a walk, a sail or a pic-nic, and always the belle of the party.

She was visiting at the house of a friend; and Jemmy felt himself so *safe* there. The newest piece of music, the most fragrant of Gibbens' bouquets, the last of Dickens's perpetrations, found their way to "Barley Place, No. 5." Susy hemmed three splendid neck-ties, with her own fair fingers; mended the little rips in his gloves, (that he had amused himself *making* for her when he sat alone in his room,) and told him, confidentially, how to trim his moustache and where to lay the pruning-knife to his whiskers. Jemmy was a lucky man!

"Jem," said Tom Lane, one night, as they sat smoking their cigars with their feet ten degrees higher than their heads, "how much longer are you going to trifle with that little widow? Why don't you ask her and done with it?"

"Widow! ask her! done with it!" said Jem, with a stupid stare, as his cigar fell into the ashes. "They said 'her husband was absent.'"

"Absent! Ha! ha! his tombstone will tell you about that!"

"I'm ruined," said Jem, "*ruined!* I have driven her out; walked with her, sailed with her, praised her eyes and hair, sent her bouquets, and music, and poetry; I've—I've done everything, Tom. What's to be done? I won't be married. I'd as lief be hung;" and pronouncing the latter part of the word *condemnation*, rather audibly, he rushed into the open air to take breath!

The next day the following item appeared in the newspapers:

"MYSTERIOUS.—The admirers of James Jessamy, Esq., will be pained to learn of his sudden and unaccountable disappearance from the —— Hotel. No clue has as yet been discovered of his whereabouts. His papers, books and wearing-apparel, are in safe keeping for his relatives, and may be had on application to Sam Springle, —— Hotel."

XVII.

JEMMY JESSAMY'S DEFENCE.

TO FANNY FERN.—*Miss Fern*: Your wanton and unprovoked attack upon me, in the last edition of the "True Flag," headed "Look before you Leap," is a *leelle* more than I can stand. I should like to know what on earth has induced you to expend your electricity upon "Jemmy Jessamy, the double-distilled bachelor?" Calling me by name, and thus setting me up as a public mark, and proclaiming just the number of years I have boarded in "—— Hotel, No. 25," and then heralding my peculiarities in regard to the chamber-maid, has put me in no enviable predicament. I begin to think it is high time I knew "something."

My hour for rising, I acknowledge, is ten A. M. I am not, then, the perfect "Beau Brummell" you have described; for I have never obtruded my

calls upon anybody until ten o'clock, by my double repeater. Well, if I was skittish about approaching women, formerly, what must I be now, since your virago-tongue has used me up by piecemeal! Talking about my "dickeys" sitting comfortably! What if I *do* allow myself a commendable latitude for turning every way? When *such* weather-cocks are in the market, it behooves us to "look before we leap." Besides, I have never taxed a female eye to stitch a dickey, sew on a button, make a shirt, or repair an overcoat since I have been in the above hotel. My tailor has always been my seamstress: and his bills, like some of the married fraternity, do not remain *unpaid*. But what right had you to assign my reasons for remaining single, and bestowing my attentions in "homœopathic doses upon a whole family of sisters?"

Then I am served up at "No. 5 Barley Place," and a game is made about myself and the widow "Susy." I am represented as playing the part of a lover, supposing her a married lady. She never sewed a rip in my glove, nor cut or curled a single hair of my moustaches in her life. To be sure, Tom Lane is a joking fellow, and he *did* talk about her husband's tombstone; but it was all gas, and, as I thought, ended in smoke.

But, last of all, I am described as absconding

from my hotel. Heavens! what a tongue you have got. Hadn't I a right to go South to cure a consumption, without a strange woman's meddling about it? While I was there, however, Miss Fan, I heard of a place just suited to your capacities. An editor advertised for a partner "that could write out thunder and lightning at a stroke." I thought of you, and added, I knew one that could do that, and throw a powerful deluge along with it. This is evidently your latitude. People at the South indulge in personalities, and then challenge each other for a duel. In this way, you would be spared many of your random shots.

The time was, when I seriously thought of the subject of marriage. I have bothered over the subject, whether women are really what they appear, until I am satisfied. If *you* are an untamed, undisguised, plain representative of the sex, may heaven protect all future Caudles from such emblems of affection! If I am an old bachelor, I am determined to wear the breeches myself. You need not dream about a codicil being attached to my will,—for your last attack has completely and forever estranged you from all claims, human or divine on

JEMMY JESSAMY.

XVIII.

THE GOVERNESS.

THE following tale is Fanny Fern's earliest attempt at a long story, now for the first time given to the world within the covers of a book.

“ ‘If you please, ma’am, a young woman in the hall, dressed in mourning, wishes to speak with you.’ The lady addressed might have been, (we are aware we are treading on debatable ground,) about thirty-eight years of age. Time, that had spared her the attraction of a graceful, pliant form, had robbed her blue eyes of their lustre, and thinned her flaxen tresses. She still rejoiced, however, in a pair of diminutive feet and ankles, which she considered it a great sin to ‘hide under a bushel,’ and had a way of her own of exhibiting on all occasions, known only to the ingenuity of a

practised coquette, or an ex-belle. She raised her eyes languidly from the last new novel she was perusing, and with the air of a victim closed the book, as John ushered in the intruder.

"Slightly raising her eyebrows, she said, 'So you are the young person who answered my advertisement for a governess?' levelling at the same time a scrutinizing glance upon her that brought the color into her fair cheek. 'In mourning, I see; very becoming, but it always gives me the dismals to see a black dress about; don't cry, child, people will die when their time comes, it's a thing that can't be helped. I suppose you understand French, German, Italian, Spanish, and all that sort of thing, if you are a governess. I desire Meta to be *fashionably* educated, and if you stay, I hope you will understand your business and be thorough, for it is a great bore to me to look after such things. I shall want you to clear starch my collars and ruffles, -and trim my breakfast caps; I see you look as though you would object to this, but you wont find such a place as this every day, and people who are driven to the wall by necessity, and have to get their own living, can't afford to be fastidious. Pity you are so pretty, child; never mind, you must keep close; you'll see no company at my house,

and I trust you are no gadder. What is your name? Grace Clifford? very romantic! Well, if you'd like to stay, John will show you to your room—but pray put away that mass of curls and wear it plain, as it looks too childish for a governess. You needn't trouble yourself to dress for dinner, as you will eat with Meta in the nursery. John! Show Miss Clifford to her room.'

"And thither, fair reader, we will follow her. Poor Grace! Left to herself, a sense of her utter loneliness overpowered her, and she wept like a child. Early left an orphan, dependent through her childhood and youth, up to the present time, upon relatives who made her feel each day, each hour, how bitter was that dependence; who grudged the bread she ate; who, envious of her beauty and superior abilities, constantly made them the subject of coarse jests and coarser taunts, Grace gladly answered Mrs. Fay's advertisement, hoping for relief from the fetters of so galling a chain. Sensitive to a fault, she had endeavored to nerve herself with strength to endure much that was annoying and repulsive in the situation she sought; but the total want of delicacy and courtesy displayed by Mrs. Fay, her coarse allusion to her late bereavement, (the death of a sister,) her ill-concealed envy

of her personal charms, all combined to depress and dishearten her.

"But Grace Clifford was a Christian. She had been early called to suffer; she knew *who* had mixed for her the cup of life, and she pushed it not away from her lips because the ingredients were bitter. She knew an ear that was never deaf to the orphan's cry, and that the promise 'When thy father and mother forsake thee,' was all her own to claim; and she rose from her knees with a brow calm as an angel's, a spirit girded for the conflict, and a peace that the world knoweth not of.

"Grace's patroness, Mrs. Fay, was the only daughter of a petty shop-keeper in the village of ———. Worshipped by doating parents for her beauty, of which little now remained, she received from them a showy, superficial education, which she was taught from childhood to consider valuable only as a stepping-stone to an establishment in life. She contemptuously turned the cold shoulder to her rustic admirers, one after the other. How this human butterfly succeeded in entrapping a matter-of-fact man, like Mr. Fay, is quite unaccountable. Be that as it may, the honeymoon saw in its decline the death of his love, and wearied with her doll face and vacant mind, he sought,

after the birth of his little daughter, his chief pleasure in the nursery, for which she entertained an unconquerable aversion.

"Reader, have you never in a Summer's day ramble stopped to admire in some secluded spot a sweet flower that had sprung up as if by magic—rich in color, beautiful in form, throwing unconsciously its sweet fragrance to the winds, unappreciated, unnoticed, uncared for, save by His eye who painted its delicate leaves? Such a flower was Meta Fay. Delicate, fragile as Spring's first violet, with a brow and eyes that are seldom seen, save where death's shadow soonest falls; and with a mind that face belied not, earnest, thoughtful and serious.

"Repulsed by her mother, who saw nothing in that little shrinking form but a bar to the enjoyment of her empty pleasures, doated on by a father who was the slave of Mammon, and who, unable to fathom the soul that looked out from the depths of those clear eyes, lavished as a recompense for the many unanswered questions prompted by her restless mind, the costliest toys of childhood. From all these would Meta turn away dissatisfied, to clasp to her bosom the simplest daisy that decked the meadow, or to hail with rapture the first sweet star that came stealing forth at evening.


"Such was Grace Clifford's pupil. All-thought of herself was soon lost in the delight of watching her young mind develop; and if a thought of her responsibility as its guardian sometimes startled her, yet it also made her more watchful, more true to her trust. A love almost like that of parent and child grew up between them. Often, when engaged in their studies, when Meta's love-speaking eyes were fixed upon her young teacher, and the flush upon her delicate cheek was coming and vanishing like the shadows of a Summer cloud, would Grace tremble for the frail casket that contained so priceless a gem.

"Meantime, Mrs. Fay continued her treadmill round of visiting, shopping and dressing, occasionally looking into the nursery, quite satisfied that her child was wonderfully improved in beauty, and willing to take it for granted everything else was as it should be. On one of these occasions Meta said,

" 'Mamma! Papa and I think Miss Clifford is a beauty.'

" 'Indeed!' said Mrs. Fay.

" 'Yes, and when I pull out her comb and let all her beautiful hair down over her shoulders, papa says it looks like waves of gold.'



"Mrs. Fay walked up to her husband and said, in a hissing whisper—

"So this accounts for the interest you take in the child's studies! In my opinion that Grace Clifford, with her sly demure face, is a great flirt—I thought she was too pretty when I engaged her. '*Golden waves!*' and with a toss of the head, be-tokening a domestic thunder-storm, her ladyship left the nursery.

"The next day, as Grace sat busy with her work, with Meta beside her, the child suddenly looked up and said,

"What is a *flirt*, Miss Clifford?"

"Grace was about to burst into a hearty laugh, but there was a look almost amounting to distress on Meta's face that checked her.


"Why do you ask me that question, my pet?"

"Oh! because mamma told papa yesterday that *you* was a flirt, and I thought—and (the child hesitated) it meant something *naughty*, because mamma was so angry."

"Poor Grace! The blood rushed in a torrent over cheek, neck and brow. Meta, frightened at the effect of her question, began to sob as if her heart would break, when the door opened, and Mr. Fay came in. Grace rushed precipitately past him, and gaining her own room, burst into a pas-

sionate flood of tears. In vain she taxed her memory to recall an indiscreet word or action, or anything that a jealous wife could construe into an invasion of her matrimonial rights. The sin, if there was any, was not forthcoming. In vain had been all her efforts to propitiate this weak-minded woman, by pulling away the obnoxious ringlets, by clear starching her muslins, or trimming with tasteful fingers her dainty little breakfast caps. The serpent had entered Eden; and although no 'forbidden fruit' had been tasted, she none the less clearly saw the flaming sword that was to drive her thence. Sheltering herself under the plea of a violent headache, she excused herself from appearing again below, and sat until a late hour at night, devising the best mode of leaving, as farther stay was impossible in such a humiliating position. She must go; *that* was plain;—but *where*?

"Suddenly she was startled from her reverie by the sound of hurrying feet in the hall. A quick rap at the door, and a summons to Meta's room followed. She had been taken suddenly and alarmingly ill. Grace forgot everything in anxiety for her darling, and hastily snatching a dressing gown, she flew to her room. The poor child was tossing restlessly from side to side; her little



hands were hot and burning, and her cheeks crimsoned with fever. Mr. Fay hastily resigned her to Grace's care, while he went for a physician.

"With the tenderness of a mother she changed the heated pillows, parted the thick curls from her little forehead, bathed the throbbing temples, and rendered the thousand little nameless services, known only to the soft step, quick eye, and delicate hand of woman.

"Meanwhile the mother slept quietly in an adjoining room, solacing herself that the doctor knew better than she what was best for the child, and fearing the effect of night vigils upon her complexion.

"When Mr. Fay returned with the physician, Meta had sunk into an uneasy slumber. Resigning her post to him, Grace watched his countenance with an anxious eye while he felt the pulse and noted the breathing of her little pupil. Writing his prescriptions, he handed them to Grace, who had signified her intention of spending the night, adding as he did so,

" 'It is needless to enjoin quiet upon one who seems so well to understand the duties of a nurse.'

"With a glance at his child, in which all the father was expressed, and a grateful 'God bless you' to Grace, Mr. Fay left the room. Shading

the small lamp, lest it might waken the child, Grace unbanded her rich tresses, and loosening the girdle of her dressing gown, seated herself beside her.

“Silently, slowly, pass the night watches, in the chamber of the sick and dying! The dull ticking of the clock, falling upon the sensitive ear of the watcher, strikes to the throbbing heart a nameless terror. With straining eye, its hours are counted; with nervous hand, at the appointed time, the healing draught is prepared for the sufferer. The measured tread of the watchman, as he passes his rounds beneath the windows, the distant rumble of the stage-coach, perchance the disjointed fragment of a song from bacchanalian lips, alone break the solemn stillness. At such an hour, serious thoughts like unbidden guests rush in. Life appears like the *dream* it is; *Eternity* the *waking*; and involuntarily the most thoughtless look up for help to *Him*, by whom ‘the hairs of our head are all numbered.’

“The stars, one by one, faded away in the golden light of morning. The sun rose fair to many an eye that should never see its setting. Meta was delirious. In fancy she roved with her dear teacher in green fields, and listened to the sweet song of birds, and was happy.

" 'Do not tell me my darling will die,' said the stricken father to the physician; then turning to Grace, he said, almost in the form of a command, 'you know how to pray; you taught her the way to heaven, when I could not; *ask for her life*; God hears the angels.'

" 'While there is life there is hope,' said the sympathizing physician, wiping away a tear; 'all that we can do we will, and leave the event with a higher power.'

" Day after day, night after night, regardless of food or rest, Grace kept tireless watch by the little sufferer; the selfish mother occasionally looking in, declaring her inability to stay in a sick-room, and expressing her satisfaction that others had more nerve than herself for such scenes.

" That day a new harp was strung, a white robe was worn, a new song was heard in heaven. *On earth, 'the child was not!'*

" 'Alone *again* in the world, alone with the *dead*,' faltered Grace, as she sank insensibly by the little corpse.

" Well was it for the grief-stricken father that a new object of solicitude was before him; well for the mother that such devotion to her dead child had at last touched a heart so encrusted with worldliness. All their united efforts, joined with

the skill of the friend and physician, were needed to rescue Grace from the grave. To an observing eye, the interest the latter evinced for his fair patient was not entirely professional. He had been touched by her self-sacrificing devotion, and her friendlessness, and each day more and more charmed with her beauty and simplicity.

* * * * *

"Softly fell the moonlight on the countless sleepers in the vast cemetery of ——. Each tiny flower swaying in the night-breeze was gemmed with nature's tears. The solemn stillness was unbroken save by the sweet note of some truant bird returning to his leafy home. How many hearts so lately throbbing with pain or pleasure lay there forever stilled! There, in her unappropriated loveliness, slept the betrothed maiden; there, the bride with her head pillowed on golden tresses whose sunny beauty e'en the great spoiler seemed loth to touch; the dimpled babe that yesterday lay warm and rosy in its mother's breast; the gray-haired sire, weary with life's conflict, the loving wife and mother in life's sweet prime, deaf to the wail of her helpless babe and to the agonized cry of its father; the faithful pastor, gone at last to hear the 'Well done, good and faithful servant;' the reckless youth, who with brow untouched by care,

and limbs fashioned for strength and beauty, had rushed unbidden into the presence of his Maker, impatient for the summons of the 'great Reaper.' On his tombstone, partial friends had written, 'he sleeps in Jesus,' while underneath, (in 'the handwriting on the wall') methought I could read, 'no murderer hath eternal life.'

"There lay the miser, who only in death's agony loosened his hold of his golden god. The widow he has made houseless, and her shivering orphans, read the mocking falsehood on the splendid marble that covers him, and murmur in words that are God's own truth, 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.'

"With a saddened heart I turn to inhale the sweet breath of the flowers planted by the hand of affection, or strewn in garlands with falling tears over the loved and lost. Before me, shining in the moonlight, is a marble tablet; on it I read, '*Our little Meta.*' I advance toward it; suddenly I see a female figure approaching, looking so spiritual in the moonlight—with her snowy robe and shining hair—that I could almost fancy her an angel guarding the child's grave. She advanced toward it, and kneeling, presses her lips to the fragrant sod, saying in a voice of anguish,

“ ‘Would to God I had died for thee, my child,
my child!’

“A kind friend had followed Grace’s footsteps.
A rich, manly voice is borne upon the air. It
shall fall like dew upon the stricken flower. Listen
to the chant!

‘There is a Reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath;
And the flowers that grow between.

‘He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He raised their drooping leaves,
It was for the *Lord of Paradise*
He bound them in his sheaves.

‘Oh not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
’Twas an angel visited the green earth
And took those flowers away.’

“A holy calm has settled upon the face of the
mourner. Noiselessly she retraces her steps, and
as she glides away, I hear her murmur, in a voice
of submission:

‘Oh! *not* in cruelty, *not* in wrath
The Reaper came that day,
’Twas an *angel* visited the green earth
And took *my flower* away.’

* * * * *

"The splendid mansion of the physician had for its mistress the orphan governess. The world, with its sycophantic smile, now flatters, where it once frowned. Both are alike to Grace, who has given her warm heart, 'till death do us part,' to one who knows well how to prize the gift."

XIX.

ALL ABOUT SATAN.

FANNY says herself, she "knows *all* about him." Now who in the world so fit to deliver a discourse on the subject, as so intimate an acquaintance? Beside, we have seen already that Fanny is in the habit of writing about her friends. Satan *might* think it a little unjust to be held responsible for babies and women's rights movements, but Fanny knows best, so here follows her sermon, text and all:—

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

"*To be sure he does! I know all about him!*
There's no knowing what *would* happen, if the
houses now-a-days were not filled up, one half
with babies and the other half with old stockings!

Then a man can tell pretty near, what his wife is about!—sure to find her, year in and year out, in that old calico wrapper, in that old rickety rocking-chair, with the last new twins in her arms, when he wants a button sewed on his coat to go to the opera. *No other way, you see!*

“Women are getting *altogether* too smart now-a-days; there *must* be a stop put to it! people are beginning to get alarmed! I don’t suppose there has been such a universal crowing since the roosters in Noah’s ark were let out, as there was among the editors when that ‘*Swisshelm*’ baby was born! It’s none of *my* business, but it *did* seem to me *rather a circular singumstance*, that she should be cut short in her editorial career that way! I suppose, however, that baby will grow out of her arms one of these days, spite of fate; and then, if there’s no *providential interposition*, she may resume her pen again. Well, I hope it will be a *warning!* the fact is, *women* have no business to be crowding into the editorial chair. Supposing they *know* enough to fill it (which I *doubt!* hem!) they oughter ‘hide their light under a b’—aby!

“I tell you, editors *won’t stand* it, to have their masculine toes trod on that way. They’ll have to sign a ‘quit claim’ to their ‘dickeys’ by and by! I wonder what the world’s coming to!

What do you suppose our *forefathers* and *foremothers* would say, to see a woman sitting up in the editorial chair, as pert as a piper, with a pen stuck behind her little ears? phew! I hope *I* never shall see such a horrid sight!"

XX.

WELL-KNOWN CHARCTERS.—BY FANNY FERN.

MISS CHARITY CRACKBONE was a spinster ; not that she ever 'spun street yarn.' Oh no ! but she spun tremendous long 'yarns' with her *tongue*, and had spun out forty years of her life in single blessedness, in a shop at the corner of Pin Alley, where you could purchase, for a consideration, gingerbread and shoe-blackening, hooks-and-eyes and cholera pills, razors and sugar candy, crackers and castor-oil, head-brushes and butter, small tooth combs and molasses.

"Not having sufficient employment in superintending her own affairs, she very philanthropically undertook to manage those of her neighbors ; and, like all persons of weak intellect, had an astonishing memory for *little* things ; could tell you the very hour, of the very day, of the very week, and

month, and year, you were born; how long you were employed in cutting your first tooth, what tailoress had the honor of introducing you into jacket and trowsers, and when you put on your first long-tail coat.

“Miss Charity’s ‘outward man’ was not remarkably felicitous; her figure much resembling a barber’s pole in its proportions. She generally preferred dresses of the flabbiest possible material, and a very tight fit; so that her projecting bones were no mystery, and as the skirt lacked two or three inches of reaching the ground, it revealed a pair of feet and ankles evidently intended more for *use* than *ornament*. Her hair was the color of a dirty blanket, and her eyes bore a strong resemblance to a drop of indigo in a pan of buttermilk.

“‘Good morning, Charity,’ said a fellow gossip; ‘*such* a budget of news!’

“Charity dropped her knitting-work, seized one chair for her visitor, and placed herself on another in front of her, with both elbows on her knees, and her face as near Miss Pettingill’s as possible, lest she should lose a word; exclaiming,

“‘For the land’s sake, make haste and begin. *Who did what?* The cat’s tail pointed north this morning, and I *knew* it was the *fore-end* of a runner of something.’

" 'I declare, I don't know which end *to* begin,' said Pettingill; '*such* a piece of work! This is a wicked, abominable world, Charity. You know that Mrs. Clark?'

" 'Land alive! don't I though? Wasn't I the first one to tell that her husband ran off and left her; and that she was a flirt and extravagant? Not that I *knew* she was, myself, but I heard tell so, and what you hear said is *most* always true. Besides, she's pretty, and that's always against a woman, as you and I know, Pettingill. Who ever heard any body talk against *us*? ' and she set her arms a-kimbo as if 'pistols for two' would be sent for, if they did! 'Well, what has the creature done *now*, Pettingill?'

" 'Why, you know she boards at Deacon Ephraim Snow's—I wonder at his having her in his house, and he a *deacon* too. But you know Mrs. Clark has 'mazin pretty ways with her, and she's got round him somehow. Well, you know I do washing for his wife, and speaking of *that*, she's horrid stingy of her soap. Well, t'other day she sent me up garret, as it rained, to hang up the clothes, and as I went by Mrs. Clark's room, it struck me I'd just peep into the key-hole and listen a bit.' Here Charity drew up her chair so close

that the tips of their noses met; saying, in a hoarse whisper,

“ ‘What *did* you see?’ ”

“ ‘La! don’t frighten me so,’ said Pettingill; ‘your eyes look like a cat’s in the dark! I saw a very fine-looking gentleman—’ ”

“ ‘*I’ll warrant it,*’ said Charity, with a triumphant chuckle.

“ ‘And I heard him say, ‘Edith, dear—’ ”

Here Charity pushed back her chair and rolled up the whites of her eyes like a duck in a thunder-storm.

“ ‘Edith dear,’ says he, ‘rely upon me; never heed these slanderous stories; I will be your protector.’ There, Charity, what do you think of that?’ ”

“ ‘She is a church-member,’ said Charity, thoughtfully, ‘isn’t she? keep quiet and watch her, the hypocrite! Did you say anything about it to Mrs. Snow, or the deacon!’ ”

“ ‘Not I,’ said Pettingill; ‘it would have fetched *me* out, you know, for *listening*; but I’m convinced the man has a ‘*canister*’ motive in going there.’ ”

“ ‘*Sinister*,’ said Charity, reprovingly, who considered herself a scholar.

“ ‘Well, *canister* or *sinister*, it makes no difference to *me*,’ said Pettingill. ‘I know what *I* think of

her. It's no use talking to the Snow's; *they* won't believe anything against her.'

" 'That's very true,' said Mrs. Snow, who had entered unperceived, and heard a great part of their conversation. 'Mrs. Clark has been with us six months, and is blameless and correct in her deportment. She has been shamefully ill-treated and slandered by her husband, as *I* know, and the gentleman about whom you were getting up such a fine story is her *brother*, who has just returned from Europe. When he said he 'would protect her,' he intended to be as good as his word; and for your own sakes I would advise you to *bear it in mind*. I have the pleasure to wish you both good-morning.'

" 'There's a tempest in a thimble,' said Charity, as she drew a long breath.

" 'Ain't it, though!' said Pettingill. 'But I'll warrant we shall catch her tripping yet. These 'grass widows,' you know.'

" 'Yes,' said Charity—'and so pretty, too. I never saw a *pretty* woman that behaved herself."

XXI.

HORACE MANN'S "OPINION."

HORACE MANN, in his lecture on "Woman," says: "I see but one reason why woman should not preach the gospel, and that reason is, that it is ten thousand times better to go about *practising* the gospel, than even to preach it."

"On this hint," Fanny characteristically waxes eloquent.

"I'm perfectly ready to close my female eyes now! Here's justice meted out to our suffering sex at last, and by a *Man-n*, too! Nobody can disturb the serenity of my soul to-day. I feel like a crowned martyr; could shake hands with every enemy I have except ——! Anybody any 'little favors' to ask, now is their time! If my bonnet wasn't bran new, I'd toss it up till it got hitched

on the horn of *some* celestial dilemma. Wonder if all those democrat cannons are used up? It's outrageous there's no way provided for a woman to express her surplus enthusiasm. If I roll up my eyes, it may suggest a pitcher of water in my face; hysterics would but feebly express my emotions; (besides, I don't know how they are got up) no use in fainting unless there's somebody 'worth while' at hand to bring you to. What's to be done? I'll borrow a 'True Flag,' and hoist it. I'll go into the woods and shout huzza! Never mind whether he's married or single—he's too much of a curiosity for a *monopoly*. Barnum must have him; he belongs to the world in general. He's booked for immortality! Napoleon, and Hannibal, and Cæsar weren't a circumstance! Just think of Horace Mann's *moral courage* in propagating such an unpopular sentiment! I shall have to get out a Fern dictionary. Can't find words to express my tumultuous emotions!"

XXII.

WHAT FANNY THINKS OF HOT WEATHER.

SHADRACH, Meshek, and Molock! how hot it is! I pity omnibus horses and ministers; I pity the little victims of narrow benches and short recesses; I pity ignorant young mothers with teething babies; I pity the Irish who huddle in a cellar and take boarders in each corner; I pity consumptive sempstresses who "sing the song of the shirt" for six cents per day; I pity dandies with tight boots; I pity cooks and blacksmiths, and red-haired people; I pity anybody who doesn't live in a refrigerator, and hasn't a *Fan* to *temper* the air.

XXIII.

FAMILY JARS.

THIS is a subject on which Fanny *ought* to speak *feelingly*. Her article thus entitled, is, however, full of funny hits, doubtless much like the roses which crown the skeleton, or the smiles which hide the heart-ache. Poor Fanny!

"Domestic peace can never be *preserved* in family jars."

Mr. Jeremiah Stubbs was rash enough to remark, one morning, to his wife Keziah, "that, after all, women had little or nothing to do; that he only wished she knew the responsibilities of a man of business." (Jeremiah kept a small shop, well stocked with maple sugar, suspicious looking doughnuts, ancient pies and decayed lemons.)—"Yes, Keziah, if you only knew the responsibili-

ties of a *man of business*,' said Jeremiah, fishing up the corner of his dickey from a questionable looking red neckerchief that protected his jugular.

" 'Well, let me know 'em, then,' said his wife, tying on her bonnet. 'Seeing is believing. We will change works for one day. You get breakfast, tend the baby, and wash and dress the other three children, and I'll go down and open shop.'

"Jeremiah didn't exactly look for this termination to the discussion; but he was a man, and of course never backed out; so he took a survey of the premises, wondering which end to begin, while Keziah went on her way rejoicing, took down the shutters like a master-workman, opened shop, made a fire, arranged the tempting wares above mentioned, with feminine ingenuity; putting the best side of everything uppermost, and wishing she had nothing else to do, from day to day, but stand behind the counter and sell them.

"This accomplished, she went home to breakfast. There sat Jeremiah, in a chair, in the middle of the room, with one side of his beard shaved off, and the lather drying on the remainder, trotting a little blue-looking wretch, in a yellow flannel night-gown, who was rubbing some soft gingerbread into his bosom with his little fists, by way of amusement. The coffee had boiled over into

the ashes, and Thomas Jefferson and Napoleon Buonaparte Stubbs were stirring up the miniature pond with Jeremiah's razor. James Madison was still between the sheets, vociferating loudly for 'his breakfast.'

"Looking with a curious eye over the pile of scorched toast for a piece that was eatable, Keziah commenced her breakfast, referring her interesting young family to their paternal derivative for a supply of their numerous wants. At last he placed a cup of muddy coffee before him, congratulating himself that his labors were ended, when the baby, considering it an invasion of his rights, made a dive at it, and he sprang from his chair with the scalding contents dripping from his unwhisperables, and—a word that church-members don't use—hissing from between his teeth.

"Calm as a summer morning, Keziah replaced her time-worn straw upon her head, telling Jerry that her children must be prepared for school at nine o'clock, the room must be swept and righted, the breakfast things washed, the potatoes boiled, and the mince-meat prepared for dinner by twelve. Her husband grinned a ghastly smile, and told her 'that was easy done.' No such thing. The comb could'nt be found; he had to wipe James

Madison's presidential phiz-mahogany on the corner of the table-cloth. Napoleon Buonaparte's pinafore had been used to wipe the dishes; Thomas Jefferson had rejoiced twice in a pair of boxed ears, for devouring the contents of the sugar-bowl; and that little yellow flannel night-gown was clutching at his heels, every step he took over the floor.

"Miserable Jeremiah! did'nt you wish you were a woman? Well, 'time and tide wait for no man.' Twelve o'clock came, and so did Keziah. Her husband would rather have seen the — hem! The bed was unmade, the children's hair stood up 'seven ways of a Sunday,' the cat was devouring the meat, the baby had the chopping-knife, and Napoleon Buonaparte was playing ball with the potatoes.

"Jeremiah's desire for immediate emancipation overcame his pride, and passing his arms *half-way* around Keziah's waist, (it was so large that he always made a chalk mark where he left off embracing, that he might know where to begin again,) he told her she was an angel, and he was a poor miserable wretch, and was ready to acknowledge his mistake. Keziah very quietly withdrew from his arm, told him the bargain was made for the day, and she would change works at night;

and treating herself to a piece of bread and butter, she departed. Jerry sat for a minute looking into the fire, then reaching down a huge parcel of maple-sugar, he put it on the floor, and seating all the young hopefuls round it, turned the key on them and the scene of his cares, mounted his beaver on his aching head, and rushed to ——'s for a *whiskey punch!* The room was nice and tidy, the fire was comfortable, the punch was *strong*, and Jeremiah was *weak*. He woke *about dark*, from troubled dreams of broomsticks and curtain lectures, and not having sufficient courage to encounter their fulfilment, has left Keziah to the glorious independence of a '*California widow*.' "

XXIV.

TWO IN HEAVEN.

THE following sketch has been pronounced by a talented Boston editor, to be the finest and sweetest article Fanny Fern ever penned. The very thought might well have served as inspiration. What roof-tree where the tears have not fallen? What household that counts not part of its number by tomb-stones?

"TWO IN HEAVEN.—'You have two children,' said I.

"'I have four,' was the reply; 'two on earth, two in heavên.'

"There spoke the mother! Still hers! only 'gone before!' Still remembered, loved and cherished, by the hearth and at the board; their places not yet filled; even though their successors draw

life from the same faithful breast where *their* dying heads were pillowed.

“‘Two in heaven!’

“Safely housed from storm and tempest; no sickness there; nor drooping head, nor fading eye, nor weary feet. By the green pastures; tended by the Good Shepherd, linger the little lambs of the heavenly fold.

“‘Two in heaven!’

“Earth less attractive! Eternity nearer! Invisible cords, drawing the maternal soul upwards. ‘Still small’ voices, ever whispering *come!* to the world-weary spirit.

“‘Two in heaven!’

“Mother of angels! Walk softly! holy eyes watch thy footsteps! cherub forms bend to listen! Keep thy spirit free from earth-taint; so shalt thou ‘go to them,’ though they may not ‘return to thee.’”

XXV.

THE PRIVATE HISTORY OF DIDYMUS
DAISY, ESQ.—BY FANNY FERN.

MRS. DAISY styled herself a *pattern wife*; a bright and shining light in the matrimonial firmament. She had inscribed on her girdle these words, from John Milton, or Mother Goose, I forget which: '*He* for God only, *she* for God in *him*.'

"She never laced her boots without asking her husband's advice, and the length of her boddice, or the depth of her flounces, were dependent upon his final decision. She went into strong convulsions at sight of a 'Bloomer,' and rolled up the whites of her eyes, like a duck in a thunderstorm, at the mention of the 'Woman's Rights' Convention,' and considered any woman who persisted in loving *white* bread, when her husband ate *brown*, as only fit for the place where——air-tight stoves

and furnaces are unnecessary! Her voice was soft and oily; she never spoke above her breath, and her motions were slow, funereal and perpendicular.

"And now I suppose you imagine Didymus was master of his own house! *Deuce a bit of it!* There was a look in the corner of his wife's eye that was as good as a loaded musket, and he fetched and carried accordingly, like a trained spaniel, tiptoeing through life on a chalk-mark, and *precious careful at that*; confining his observation of the world to the latitude and longitude of her apron-strings. But it was always 'husband,' and 'dear Daisy,' even when he knew his life wasn't worth two cents if he abated one jot or tittle of his matrimonial loyalty.

"It was very refreshing to hear her ask him 'his opinion' in company, and his diplomatic windings and twistings on those occasions were worthy of the wildest politician that ever flourished at the 'White House.' As to speaking to any other female than Mrs. Daisy, he would as soon have ordered his own coffin; and, truth to tell, this was where the matrimonial yoke weighed the heaviest, for Didymus (unlucky wretch) had an eye for a dainty waist or a pair of falling shoulders, or a light, springing step; but the way he had to

'*shoulder! march!*' when they 'hove in sight,' was crucifying to his feelings!

"Mrs. Daisy always went with him, to and from the store, for '*exercise.*' (?) He was never allowed to go out after dark; his evenings being mainly occupied in holding skeins of silk, or sorting knots of 'German Worsted,' to give his wife an opportunity to immortalize her genius in transforming the same into hump-backed dogs, deformed lambs and rabbits, with ears twice as long as their bodies. Under such watchful guardianship he was in a fair way to be able to omit entirely at his orisons, this petition—'Lead us not into temptation.'

"This hymeneal strait-jacket was more particularly affecting, inasmuch as Mrs. Daisy *herself* was not what her *name* would seem to suggest, saving that she was very red. It was the problem of her life to find dresses and hats that 'agreed with her complexion,' and she might well have exclaimed '*how expensive it is to be ugly.*'

"Well, 'it's a long lane that has no turning;' and so Didymus thought, when he woke up one fine morning and found himself a widower! Did you ever see a poor robin let loose from a cage? or a mouse released from the clutches of grimal-kin? or a kitten emancipated from an easy-chair, where she had been mistaken for a cushion by

some fat old lady of about two hundred weight? Well—*I say nothing!* The satisfaction with which Didymus ordered his ‘weeds,’ spoke for itself! In HIS mental rainbow, *black* was hereafter to be ‘*couleur de rose!*’ He purchased Mrs. Daisy a *nice* coffin, and a STRONG one; and his speech to Miss Maria Fitz Bumble was cut and dried, and ready for delivery as soon as he had safely planted his *first* Daisy in the earth!

“Didymus was a *man* again! He dared to look himself in the face! He stood up straight, and, clapping his hand on his waistband, exclaimed—‘Daisy, *this* is living, old boy!’ Julius Cæsar! what ails the man, as he turns his horrified gaze towards the bed!

“‘There—there! *that’ll do!*’ said Mrs. Daisy. ‘Don’t make a donkey of yourself, Didymus, because *that* is unnecessary! I was only in a *faint*, my dear! A FEINT—ha! ha! I think I understand you *now*, from Genesis to Revelations. That *black* coat’s a *good fit*;—very *becoming*, too! *Maria—Fitz—B—U—M—B—L—E—E!!* There, that’ll do, Didymus. *Sorry to disappoint you*, but I’m just as good as *new!*’”

XXVI.

THE WEDDING DRESS.

UNDER this title appeared in the columns of the True Flag, one of Fanny's most effective sketches. Thus ran the tale:—

“ ‘Good-bye, dearest mother,’ said Emma, as she pressed her lips to her forehead. ‘Let me bring your foot-stool and your spectacles before I go. We shall have a lovely drive, and I’ll not stay after nightfall.’ •

“As she listened to the sound of the retreating wheels, Mrs. Leland said to herself, ‘I’m selfish to be unwilling to part with Emma, but she is so good and so beautiful. Her presence is like a ray of sunshine; my room seems so dark and cheerless when she leaves me; and yet it will not be long that I can watch over her; and when these

dim eyes are closing, it will be a comfort to know that she has a protector and a husband.'

"Mrs. Leland was a widow—that name always suggestive of desolation, want and sorrow. Her husband, however, had left herself and Emma enough to keep them from suffering, and the latter had made her musical talents available in driving poverty from the door.

"About a year before the date of my story, Emma had met with Lionel. Of prepossessing exterior and polished manners, the young merchant had made himself a welcome guest at the quiet fireside of the widow. Thoughtful and attentive to Mrs. Leland, he had already yielded her the devotion of a son. She was alone most of the day, but when Emma returned to her at night, with her tasks completed, and they were seated around their little table, and Emma herself prepared the nice cup of tea that was to refresh her invalid mother, and evening came, and with it Lionel, with his bright, handsome face, and winning smile and soft low tones; how quickly the hours fled away! And now she was soon to be his bride. Their cottage home in the outskirts of the city was already chosen, and thither they had gone to make arrangements for their removal. And who so happy as the lovers, that long, bright, summer

afternoon? The little cottage rooms were carefully inspected; the pretty rosebush was trained anew over the low door-way, and the gardener had especial orders to take care of the nice flower-beds and gravel walks. Amid the last sweet carol of the birds, when the flowers, heavy with the falling dew, were drowsily nodding their heads, and the first bright star of evening was timidly stealing forth; in the dim, fragrant twilight, again and again they exchanged new vows of love.

"When Emma remembered the dull and cheerless past, life seemed now to her a fairy dream; she trembled to *be* so happy. Then a dark shadow would pass before her eyes, and she would say, shudderingly, '*What if a change should come!*' but she looked in Lionel's face, and remembered it no more.

"Home was gained at last, Lionel assisted his fair companion to alight; she sprang gaily up the steps, and was turning to wave her hand to him as he left, when she saw a man step up to him, lay his hand familiarly on his shoulder, and, taking the reins in *his own hands*, drive off. Supposing him to be some friend, or business acquaintance, she thought no more of it, and passed into the house.

"'It is needless to ask you if you have enjoyed

your ride, my daughter,' said Mrs. Leland, looking with a mother's admiration at the bright flush on her cheek, and her sparkling eye.

" 'Oh! it was so delightful, mother, at the cottage; and we shall be so *happy* there,' said the fair girl, as she laid aside her pretty hat and shook from their confinement her long, bright tresses. Then, seating herself at the window, she commenced embroidering a part of her wedding dress.

"Soon after, a stranger called to see Mrs. Leland on business; and Emma withdrew to their little bed-room. She was sitting there, busy with her work; a song, sweet as a bird's carol trembled on her lips, when Mrs. Leland returned.

" 'Emma!'

"She turned her head to see her mother's face overspread with the pallor of death. Springing to her side, she said, 'Mother! dear mother! who has dared? what has troubled you? who is this stranger?'

"Her mother pointed to the wedding dress, saying, (as if every word rent her heart-strings,)

" 'Emma, *you'll never need that!* Lionel is arrested for forgery.'

" ' 'Tis false!' Emma would have said, but the words died on her lips, and she fell heavily to the floor.

"One fainting fit succeeded another through that long, dreary night, till life seemed almost suspended. Morning came, and woke the sufferer to consciousness. Passing her hand slowly across her forehead, as if still bewildered, and unable to realize the dreadful change that had passed over her, she said,

" 'Mother, I must go to Lionel!'

" 'No, no,' said Mrs. Leland, 'tis no place for you, Emma.'

"Covering her face, as if to shut out some dreadful vision, she said, 'I care not *where* I find him, mother! I must go or *die*. Would you kill your child?'

"The succeeding day found her at the prison door. As the key grated in the lock for her admittance, she shuddered and hung back; but it was only for an instant. Nerving herself, as by a strong effort, she advanced and threw herself, fainting, upon Lionel's breast. As the jailer came towards her, Lionel started to his feet, and with a fierce gesture, motioned him off. Pressing his lips to her cold forehead, he said to himself, 'If she would but pass away thus!' But death comes not at the bidding of the wretched, and there she lay, that young, fair thing, with her beautiful head bowed with grief and shame; still loving, still

trusting, through dishonor and pain, with the strong, deep love of *a woman's heart*. Even the stern jailer, though inured to scenes of human suffering, brushed away the tears with his rough hand from his furrowed cheeks, and said, 'God be merciful.'

"Few words were spoken by either, and the allotted hour passed by. One long embrace—and the wretched man was again *alone* in his cell, with an accusing conscience; the darker, the gloomier for the angel-light that was withdrawn.

"And Emma! She was borne back again to the arms that had pillowed her infancy, and laid her head upon her mother's breast like a tired child. The agony of that hour had done the work of years. The rose had faded from the cheek, the eyes were dim and lustreless. She only said, '*I'm weary.*'

"And so weeks passed by. Nothing interested her, nothing seemed to rouse her from her apathy. At length news reached them of Lionel's escape! The change in Emma was instantaneous. Her manner became excited, nervous and hurried; she passed about the house arranging everything to the best advantage, as if expecting some friend or guest.

"One stormy night they sat at their little table,

each busy with their own sad memories. The wind wailed dismally, and the beating rain had driven every living thing to seek a shelter. Mrs. Leland spoke of the fury of the storm, and Emma glanced toward the window. A dark face was prest close against it! Those eyes! (she passed her hand across her own, as if to clear her vision,) those eyes were Lionel's! Tottering as if bent by age, she staggered towards the door, and in a moment they were in each other's arms. What a night of fear, and horror, and joy was that! for he must away before the day should dawn.

" 'Then you go not *alone*,' said Emma; 'if you have sinned you have also *suffered*.'

" 'Yes, and it's but right he should,' said a rough voice, as the door was rudely burst, and a stout man advanced to make him prisoner.

"Lionel had prepared himself for *this*. A flash! a report! the lovers lay side by side. They were *both prisoners*, but *Death* was the *jailer*!"

XXVII.

IS IT BEST TO USE ENVELOPES?

ON this question hear Fanny!

"Mrs. Joseph Smith was the envy of all the wives in the neighborhood. Such a *pattern* husband as Smith was, to be sure! He never went across the room without hugging his wife first, and language would fail to describe their melancholy partings when he 'tore himself away,' to go down to the store. If the wind got round east after he had left, he always ran back to tell her to put on an extra petticoat; he cut up her food in homœopathic infinitesimal bits, to assist her digestion, and if she wanted an ice-cream or a lobster-salad in the middle of the night, it was forthcoming. Did she have the headache, the blinds were closed, the bell was muffled, and he was the most wretched of Smiths till she was

convalescent. He selected her shoe-strings and corset-lacings himself, and when her health was too delicate to admit of her accompanying him to church, he always promised to sit in the middle of the house, so that in case the galleries should fall he needn't be made any *flatter* than he was by nature.

"The present Mrs. Smith was his *fourth* wife, and as Joseph had been heard to say, that 'the more he loved his Elenore, the more he loved his Nancy, and the more he loved his Nancy, the more he loved his Julia and Mary,' any one with half an eye, could see how peculiarly felicitious *Mrs Mary Smith's* position must be!

"There never was a sweet without a bitter; and so she found out, when Joseph announced to her that he 'must leave the little heaven of her smiles, to go on a short 'business trip.' Mary went into the strongest kind of hysterics, and burnt feathers and sal-volatile couldn't bring her out of them, till he swore on the dictionary to telegraph to her every hour, and carry his life preserver and a box of Russia salve.

"On arriving at the depot, a gentleman requested leave 'to place a lady under his protection,' who was travelling in the same direction. Smith looked at her; she was young and pretty,

and dressed in deep mourning. 'A widow!' said Smith to himself. 'Certainly, sir, with pleasure.'

"How they *did* get on! With opening and shutting the windows in the cars, pulling that travelling shawl round the pretty shoulders that *wouldn't* keep it up, and trying to quiet her nerves when the cars went through 'the dark places,' Smith didn't know any more than *you* whether they were travelling through France or Spain, and what's more, he *didn't care!*

"Arriving at their place of destination much sooner than was necessary, (conductors and engineers have no bowels of mercy,) he escorted the widow to the house of her friend, taking the most disinterested care of the big and little band-boxes, and was strongly tempted to put an end to the life of the little poodle-dog she carried in her arms.

"An hour after, he sat down in his lonely quarters at the hotel, and dutifully drew towards him a sheet of paper to write to his wife. It ran as follows:—

"MY DEAREST WIFE: If you knew how utterly desolate I am without you. I can think of nothing else, and feel entirely unfitted for business. As for *pleasure*, that is out of the question, without

you. I've been bored to death with the care of an empty-headed woman—(you know I couldn't *refuse*, my angel); but I never will be hampered so again. I long for the day that will return me to your arms. Your loving husband,

“‘J. S——’

“Then drawing towards him a ~~nice~~ sheet of embossed note-paper, he penned the following:—

“‘MY DEAR MADAM: Those blue eyes have never ceased to haunt me since we parted. Thank you for your flattering acceptance of my invitation to ride. I will call for you at four this afternoon. Till then, my heart is with you.

“‘Yours, ever,

“‘JOSEPH SMITH.’

“Full two mortal hours Joseph spent at his ‘twilight,’ adorning his outer man. How those whiskers were curled and perfumed! What a fit were those primrose kid gloves! How immaculate was that shirt bosom! How *excruciatingly* those boots pinched! The very horses pricked up their ears and arched their necks proudly, as if they knew what a freight of loveliness they were to carry.

“Arrived at the widow’s Joseph handed the reins to a servant and was settling his pet curl,

preparatory to mounting the stairs, when a letter was rudely thrust into his hand, and he was unceremoniously seized by *that* dickey and sent spinning out upon the side-walk. As soon as he recovered breath, he picked himself up, and looked at the letter. Horror of horrors! He had placed the letters in the wrong envelopes! The widow had his wife's, and what was worse, his wife the widow's! Oh, Smith! Oh, JOSEPH Smith!

"MORAL.—Some think it wise to use envelopes; 'some *othewise*.' *Joseph* inclines to the *latter* opinion, and advises all 'pattern husbands' to be of the same mind. His message hails from California!"

XXVIII.

FEMININE WISDOM.

WE insert the following for the special benefit of the ladies. It is true, Fanny very characteristically informs us, that they 'don't all know as much as *she* does,' but then that is hardly to be expected.

"Tupper, speaking of the choice of a wife, says, 'Hath she wisdom? it is precious, but *beware that thou exceed!*'"

"My dear sir, wasn't you caught napping that time? Didn't you speak in meeting? Didn't cloven feet peep out of your literary shoes? Don't it take an American woman to see through you! Isn't that a tacit acknowledgment that there *are* women who do 'exceed?' Wouldn't you think so if you lived *this* side the pond? Hope you

don't judge *us* by John Bull's daughters, who stupefy themselves on roast-beef and porter. I tell you Yankee women are on the squirrel order. You'd lose your English breath trying to follow them. There isn't a man here in America that knows as much as his wife. Some of them *own* it, and some don't, but they all believe it, like gospel. They ask our opinion about everything. Sometimes straightforward, and sometimes in a circle—but they *ask it!* There are petticoats in the pulpit, petticoats in the editorial chair, petticoats in the lecturer's desk, petticoats behind the counter, petticoats labelled 'M. D.' Oh, *they 'exceed!'* no mistake about that. All femality is wide awake over here, Mr. Tupper. They crowd, and jostle, and push, just as if they wore hats. I don't uphold them in *that*, because, as I tell them, 'tis better policy to play possum, and wear the mask of submission. No use in rousing any *unnecessary* antagonism. *But they don't all know as much as I do.* I shall reach the goal just as quick in my velvet shoes, as if I tramped on rough-shod as they do, with their *Woman's Rights Convention brogans!*

XXIX.

ALWAYS SPEAK THE TRUTH.

WHY, Fanny Fern! Did you ever hear any old saying about practising and preaching? How came you ever to think of this sentiment? Oh, Fanny! you are a born *writer of fiction*. Didn't you prove your genius for that sort of thing when you wrote the following 'Fern.'

“Well, now, do you know I did that, till I came very near being mobbed in the street for a curiosity? I was verdant enough to believe that ‘honesty was the best policy.’ The first astonisher that I had, was on the occasion of the visit of a vain old lady to our house, before I was out of pantalettes. Her bonnet was stuck full of artificial flowers, looking as much out of place as a wreath of rosebuds on a mummy! Some such thought

was passing through my mind, as I stood looking at her—when, mistaking my protracted gaze for one of *admiration*, she faced square about, and asked me if I didn't think they were *becoming*? 'No ma'am,' said I, never flinching a hair. *Didn't* I get a boxed ear for that?

"Well, I didn't make out much better in my subsequent attempts to 'speak the truth;' and what visionary ever concocted such nonsense, *I'm* at a loss to know.

"I'd like to put the question to you, and *you*, and *you*, and *YOU*!—Would the wheels of creation ever 'go ahead' without one everlasting intolerable squeak, if they were not 'oiled up' constantly with flattery? No shirking, now! no dodging the question! *OF COURSE* they wouldn't! I humbly confess I ain't broke in myself, as much as I ought to be, but I'm learning by degrees! I can't help looking over my shoulder occasionally when anybody says a pretty thing to me to see if 'cloven foot' is anywhere round! but that will wear off in time. It almost killed me the first time I did the agreeable to a person I had no more respect for than Judas Iscariot, but I lived through it, though I don't take to it naturally!

"I've a tell-tale trick of blushing, too, when I'm being delivered of a lie, that stands very much in

my light. I'm afraid there's some defect in my organization. I've applied to two or three young physicians, but they only aggravate my complaint. I'm thinking of putting myself under the tuition of ——; if I don't 'take my degree' THEN, I'll *give up* and done with it!

"Oh dear! it's an awful thing to grow up! to find your catechise, and Jack the Giant-Killer, and your Primer, and Mother Goose, all a humbug! To come across a wolf making 'sheep's eyes' at a lamb; to be obliged to make a chalk-mark on the saints to know them from the sinners; to see husbands, well—THERE! when I think of THEM, I must wait till a new dictionary is made before I can express my indignation! Wish I'd been introduced to Adam before he found out it was beyond him to keep the commandments. If there's anything I hate, '*tis an apple!*'"

XXX.

MOSES MILTIADES MADISON.

EVERYBODY knows Moses. He and others like him, "carry the bag" in too many of our churches. But nobody seems to know him so well as Fanny; so we will let her relate his "experience," in her own words:

"Moses Miltiades Madison would fain have the world believe that the stumbling-block the fallen angels tripped over was no besetting sin of *his*.

"The very tails of his coat hung around him in a helpless kind of a way, as if they knew they *ought* to be suggestive of their owner's *humility*. No sinful zephyrs presumed to dally with the straight locks, plastered with such puritanical precision over his diminutive head; his mouth had a sanctimonious drawing down at the corners, and his voice was a cross between a groan and a wail. At every

prayer-meeting and conventicle, Moses was on the ground, (simultaneously with the sexton,) made the most long-winded prayer; elaborated to *seventh-LIE*, the verse he was expounding, and kept one note ahead of the singing-choir in the 'doxology;' knew exactly how long it would be before the natives of the Palm Tree Islands would dress more fashionably than the wild beasts around them, and was entirely posted up about the last speech and confession of the very latest missionary whom the savages had made mince-meat of.

"Now Moses had an invalid wife; and his 'path of duty,' after evening meeting, generally laid in the direction of Widow Gray's house. *She* was 'afraid,' and *he—wasn't!* So he took the prayer-book, the Bible, and the widow, under his protection, and went the longest way round. His wife, to be sure, before his return, came to the conclusion that it was a '*protracted* meeting,' but then *Moses* was 'a burning and a shining light,' (at least so the 'church' said,) and if *Mrs.* Moses was of a different opinion, she kept it to herself. That he did occasionally pervert Scripture words and phrases, and make a very 'carnal' use of the same, when none of the congregation were present, was an indisputable fact; that the crickets, and chairs and tables, sometimes changed places in a hurry, was

another; but the last was probably owing to his being a 'medium' for some '*spiritual* rappings.'

"But if Mrs. Moses 'kept dark,' Jeremiah Jones wouldn't! He was as thorough and straight-forward in his religion as he was in building houses; he detested 'sham foundations,' as he professionally expressed it!

"One night, in an evil hour, Moses popped up, as usual, from his seat in meeting, intending to give an extra touch to his devotional exercises, as he contemplated taking a longer walk than usual with little Widow Gray. So he told 'the brethren,' (through his nose,) that 'if ever there *was* a sinner that deserved a *very* uncomfortable place hereafter, it was *him*—(*Moses!*)—that it was a marvel to him that he was permitted to cumber the earth, that his sins were more than the hairs on his head,' (and, by the way, that was a very moderate computation!)

"So Jeremiah Jones seemed to think; for he 'riz' very demurely, and remarked that 'he had been brother Moses Madison's neighbor for many years, and was qualified to endorse that little statement of his, with regard to himself, as *substantially correct in every particular!*' Moses fainted!"

XXXI.

TOM VERSUS FAN; OR, A LITTLE TALK ABOUT LITTLE THINGS.

IN the sketch thus entitled, we are once more presented with a life picture, a veritable transcript of the writer's own mind. It will be seen that Fanny is *au fait* in the mysteries of coquetry; understands the use of long dresses, and "gaiter-boots" to perfection. Just listen:—

" 'Well, Fan; any room for *me* here?' said Tom Grey, as he seated himself in a large arm-chair in his sister's boudoir.

" 'Possession is nine points of the law, Tom; it's no use answering in the negative *now*.'

" 'I'm in a very distracted state of mind, sis, and I've come to make a clean breast of it to you.'

" 'Mercy on us! if you are going to confess your

sins, I shall beat a retreat; the catalogue is longer than my patience.'

" 'Listen; you know yesterday was one of my days for walking?'

" 'Boisterous wind, hey?'

" 'Yes; and a man *must* use his eyes when the gods favor him. Just before me, in Washington-street, I saw *such* a pair of feet! Now you know pretty feet are my passion, and 'Cinderella's' were not a circumstance to these. So I travelled on behind them, in a state of mute ecstasy, and they might have led me to the Dead Sea, and I shouldn't have stopped to ask any questions!'

" 'Did you see her face?'

" '*Face?*—I didn't think of such a thing. I shouldn't have cared if she hadn't any face. Of course it was pretty; nature wouldn't have perfected those continuations to that degree and left—but no matter, they were 'the *greatest*' feet for *little feet*, I ever saw. All of a sudden my goddess vanished into a shoe-store, and I stood gaping in at the window and wishing I was the clerk. Presently, the young man handed her a pair of boots, and going round the counter, down he goes on one knee, and, by the blessed saints! if *he didn't take that dear little foot in his lap and try on those boots!* The rascal was twice as long about it as he need

be, too, for after it was all laced on, he kept 'smoothing out the wrinkles,' as *he* said, 'on the instep.' St. Crispin! *wasn't* I furious!

" 'Well—didn't you see her face, all this time? '

" 'No, I tell you; she had one of those curs—I beg pardon—*curious* veils that you women are so fond of playing *beau peep* with! But her shawl fell off, and you'd better believe there was a figure under it even *those feet* might be proud to carry.'

" 'Well—let's have the denouement.'

" 'She got into an omnibus—didn't I wish I was the mat in the bottom of it? No room for another soul, outside or in, or I should have followed her. Wish I might wake up and find myself *married* to *those feet*, some morning! '

" 'Fan—these long skirts are very effective weapons in the hands of a pretty woman. They are provocative of curiosity. Now Bloomers—ugh! (a man is disenchanted at once;) but a nice, plump, little, cunning foot, creeping in and out, *mice-like*, from under those graceful folds—depend upon it, no woman who knows anything, will ever shorten her skirts. A coquette does as much execution with them as a Spanish dame with her fan and mantilla.'

" 'Many a woman, when she thinks it worth her while, 'gets up' an imaginary quagmire, and,

presto! *there's* a pair of feet for you! and then down goes the long skirt again, and a man's *senses* with it. Jupiter! *don't* they understand it?

"Tom, if you was worth the trouble, I'd box your ears! Look out the window there, I *suppose* that's a man; a *cane and a coat-tail walking behind a moustache!* Well, here's the thermometer up to boiling point, and his coat is buttoned up tight to his jugular, *to show his chest* to the best possible advantage. I don't believe if he was stifling, he'd let his throat out of prison. Oh, *vanity!* thy name is *man!* I sat here at the window, laughing till I had fits, to see that fellow *prink*, the other morning, and make himself beautiful. The *attitudes*, he practised! the different styles of *hair* he 'got up,' and brushed *down!* the neck-ties he tried on! the way his *bosom-pin* wouldn't *locate* to his satisfaction! were all excruciating to my risibles.'

"Well, Fan, you've no mercy, so I might as well say—I suppose, as to the comparative vanity of men and women,—it's six of one and half-a-dozen of the other; but to change the subject. Do you know I was thinking, to-day, that *dentistry* might be made a very fascinating occupation if one could but choose one's customers?"

"As how?" said Fan.

"Why *I* should proceed after *this* fashion.

When a pretty woman came to me, I should plant her down in the crucifying chair; open sundry mysterious-looking drawers, spread out a formidable array of instruments under her little nose, take up all the files, and saws, and scrapers, one by one, and hold them up to the light to see if they were ready primed. Then I'd step round behind her chair (getting napkin, basin, and footstool fixed to my satisfaction.) The effect I calculated on being produced, the little blue-eyed victim would turn pale and look deliciously imploring into my face—then I'd use a little 'moral suasion,' as the ministers say—and quiet her nerves. Then follows an examination of her mouth, (I should make a long job of that!) Very likely the light would not be right, and I should have to move her head a little nearer to my shoulder, then it is more than probable her long curls would get twisted round the buttons of my coat; *there 'd* be a web for two to unweave! Then we'd commence *again*; the file in my hand makes an unlucky move against some sensitive tooth,—by that time it is to be hoped she'd be ready to faint, and need something held to her lips! Oh, Fan, my mind is in a state of vibration between *dentistry* and the *shoe business*!

“ ‘What do you think of the clerical profes-

sion?' said Fan, laughing. '*That* would give you an opportunity to ask them plump, without any circumlocution or *circumbendibus*, the state of their hearts? You'd be of the Methodist persuasion, of course, and patronize 'Love Feasts.'

"'Not a bit of it. If I went into *that* line of business, I'd be a Roman Catholic priest, and get up a confession box, and the first exercise of my authority after that would be to get *you* into a nunnery *somewhere*. I never saw a 'Fanny' yet that wasn't as mischievous as Satan.'

"'The *name* is infectious, my dear; can't you get it *changed* for me? Speaking of that, Tom, you know that 'miserable young man' that talked so freely of 'prussic acid and daggers' once on a time? May I die an old maid if he isn't the owner of a pretty little wife and two or three children—he is as fat as a porpoise, merry as a cricket, gay as a lark—don't he sing out to me 'how d'ye do Fan?' in the most *heart-whole* fashion, as if he never said anything *more* than that to me all the days of his life! Oh, Tom! *men have died*—and *worms have eaten 'em*—but—*not for love!*'

"'Do *women* ever die for love?'

"'Heaven forbid! I *did* see a man the other day, though, oh Tom!!—never mind; he's gone—with your '*little feet*;' vanished into that grave of

our mutual hopes—an omnibus! my heart went with him—*such* a figure as he had! Saints and angels! wouldn't I like to see him again? I've had an overpowering sensation of *goneness* ever since! and speaking of *goneness*, won't you *walk out*, before you light that horrid cigar.'"

XXXII.

A LETTER TO THE TRUE FLAG.

Next get into the habit of writing letters to your female acquaintances, which will draw from them replies; from both of which sources you will in time learn enough of female vanity and sentimentality to form the ground-work of a love-story.—*True Flag*, No. 39.

DEAR MR. TRUE FLAG:—I'm appointed 'a committee of one,' to inquire *who* perpetrated that sentiment in your last week's paper? *Trot him out!* please, and let me put my two eyes on him; and if *looking* will annihilate him, there shan't be anything left for the undertaker to shovel up. I'm *indignant, very!* and what's more; *I don't like it!*

"*'Female vanity and sentimentality!'* Oh, Delilah, Dolly, Julia, Jane, Agnes, Amelia, Kathleen, Kitty, your letters fell into the hands of the Philistines, and *that's* their epitaph!

"*'Female vanity and sentimentality!'* O-o-h!

May you never have a string to your dickey, or a dickey to your string! button to your coat, or a pair of *whole* gloves or stockings. May you sit in a state of utter inconsolability over your unswept, untidy hearth, and bachelor fire. May you never have a soft place to lay your head when it aches; no nice little hand to magnetize away the blue devils; nobody to jump up on a cricket and tie your neck-cloth in a pretty little bow! No bright eyes to look proudly out the window after you when you go down to the store! no pretty little feet to trip to the door to meet you when you come back! May your coffee be smoky, your toast burnt, your tea be *water-bewitched*; your razor grow dull, your moustache *turn the wrong way*! your boots be '*corned*!' your lips be innocent of a kiss from this day, henceforward and forever; and may you die a cantankerous, crusty, captious, companionless, musty, fusty *old Benedict*! Amen!

"FANNY FERN.

"P. S.—If he's *handsome*, dear Mr. Flag, we'll remove the anathema, and let him off with a slight reprimand, under promise of better behavior.

"F. F."

XXXIII.

THE ORPHAN.—BY FANNY FERN.

IT was a rough, dark, unsightly-looking, old farmhouse. The doors were off the hinges, panes of glass were broken in the windows, the grass had overgrown the little gravel-path, and the pigs and poultry went in and out the door as if they were human. Farmer Brady sat sunning his bloated face on the door-step, stupid from the effects of the last debauch; his ungainly, idle boys were quarrelling which should smoke his pipe, and two great romps of girls, with uncombed locks and tattered clothes, were swinging on the gate in front of the house.

"Everything *within* doors was in keeping with the disorder that reigned without, save a young, fair girl, who sat at the low window, busily sewing on a coarse garment. Her features were regular and delicate, her hands and feet small and beauti-

fully formed, and despite her rustic attire, one could see with a glance that she was a star that had wandered from its sphere.

“‘I say, Lilla,’ said one of the hoydens, bounding into the kitchen and pulling the comb out of Lilla’s head, as she bent over her work, shedding the long, brown hair around her slight figure till her white shoulders and arms were completely veiled; ‘I say, make haste about that gown. Ma said you should finish it by noon, and you don’t sew half fast enough.’

Lilla’s cheeks flushed, and the small hands wandered through the mass of hair in the vain attempt to confine it again, as she said, meekly, ‘Won’t you come help me, Betsey? my head aches sadly, to-day.’

“‘No, I won’t. You think because you are a lady, that you can live here on us and do nothing for a living; but you *won’t*, and you are no better than Peggy and I, with your soft voice, and long hair and doll face.’ So saying, the romp went back again to her primitive gymnasium, *the gate*.

Lilla’s tears flowed fast, as her little fingers flew more nimbly, and by afternoon her task was completed, and she obtained permission from her jailers to take a walk. It was a joy to Lilla to be alone with nature. It was a relief to free herself from

vulgar sights and sounds, to exchange coarse taunts, and rude jests, and harsh words, for the song of birds, the ripple of the brook, and the soft murmur of the wind as it sighed through the tall tree-tops.

"Poor Lilla! with a soul so tuned to harmony, to be condemned to perpetual discord! Through the long, bright, summer days, to drudge at her ceaseless toil, at the bidding of those harsh voices; at night, to creep into her little bed, but to recall tearfully a dim vision of childhood. A gentle, wasted form; a fair, sweet face, growing paler, day by day; large, lustrous, loving eyes, that still followed her by day and night; then, a confused recollection of a burial—afterwards a dispute as to her future home, ending in a long, dismal journey. Since then, scanty meals, the harsh blow, coarse clothing, taunting words and bitter servitude; and then she would sob herself to sleep as she asked, 'Must it *always* be thus? is there none to care for me?'

"The golden days of summer faded away; the leaves put on their dying glory, the soft wind of the Indian summer lifted gently the brown tresses from Lilla's sweet face. She still took her accustomed walks, but it was *not alone*. A stranger had taken up his residence at the village inn. He had met Lilla in her rambles, and his ready inge-

nuity soon devised a self-introduction. He satisfied himself that she claimed no affinity to the disorderly inmates of the farm-house; he drew from her her little history, and knew that she was an orphan, unprotected in her own sweet innocence, save by Him who guards us all.

"And so—the dewy, dim twilight witnessed their meetings, and the color came to the pale cheek of Lilla, and her eyes grew wondrously beautiful, and her step was as light as her heart, and harsh household words fell to the ground like arrows short of the mark—for *Lilla was happy*. In the simplicity of her guileless heart, how should *she* know that Vincent lived only for the present? that she was to him but *one* of *many* beautiful visions, admired *to-day*—forgotten *to-morrow*! It was such a joy to be near him, to feel herself appreciated, to know that she was beloved!

"And so time passed on; but their meetings had not been unnoticed; rough threats were uttered to Lilla if they were continued, for she had made herself too useful to be spared. All this was communicated to her lover, as they met again at the old trysting-place, and *then*, as she leaned trustingly on his arm, Vincent whispered in her ear words whose full import she understood not. Slowly the truth revealed itself! Her slight

figure grew erect, as she withdrew from his supporting arm—her soft eye flashed with indignation, and the man of the world stood abashed in the presence of innocence. A moment—and *he was alone*, beneath the holy stars!

“That night, Lilla fled her home; she could scarce be more desolate or unprotected. The next day found her, foot-sore and weary, in the heart of the great city, startled and trembling like the timid deer fleeing from its pursuers.

Lilla knew that she was beautiful. She read it in the lengthened gaze of the passers-by. Friendless, houseless, and beautiful! God help thee, Lilla!

“In a dark, unhealthy garret sat Lilla! Her face, still lovely, was pale as marble; her fingers flew with lightning rapidity over the coarse work that yielded her only a *shelter*; but there were angel faces, (unseen by her,) smiling approval, and she could clasp those small hands when the day's toil was over, and say ‘*Our Father*,’ with the innocent heart of childhood, and invisible ones had charge to guard her footsteps, and ‘He who feedeth the ravens,’ gave her ‘daily bread.’

“One day she took her little bundle, as usual, to the shop of her employers, and, while waiting

for the small pittance due, her eye fell upon an advertisement 'for a housekeeper,' in a newspaper before her. But how could *she* obtain it? without recommendation, without friends. She resolved to try. Her little hand trembled nervously as she pulled the bell of the large, handsome house. She was preceded by the servant into the library, where sat a fine-looking man in the prime of life. He looked admiringly upon the shrinking, modest face and form before him. She told him, in a few simple words, her history.

"The eccentric old bachelor paused for a moment, then taking her hand, he said, 'I advertised for a *housekeeper*—but I'm more in need of a *wife*. *Will you marry me?*'

"And so Lilla became a happy, honored wife; and if a flush passes over her sweet face when she meets Vincent in the circle of her husband's acquaintances, it is from no lingering feeling of affection for the treacherous heart that held in such light estimation the sacred name of *orphan*."

XXXIV.

AN ANSWER TO MRS. CROWE.—BY
FANNY FERN.

“I incline to think that a girl really in love—one who bore the evident symptoms of the malady—would be thought very improper; yet I have often fancied that there must be a man born in the world for every woman; one whom to see would be to love, to reverence, to adore; one with whom her sympathies would so entirely blend, that she would recognize him at once her true lord. Now and then these pairs come together; and woe to her who meets this other self too late.”
—*Mrs. Crowe.*

OH, my dear Mrs. Crowe, don't speak of it! Isn't it *dreadful* to think of? It is not only *woe*, but *WHOA!!* You mustn't *look* at him, woman alive; nor *think* of him. Just number over all *Mr. Crowe's* excellencies on your ten fingers; get married over again, (if it will help you any); do anything but think of that '*other self*.' I've no

manner of doubt but Satan will send him across your path at every turn and corner. Turn your *head* away, if you can't your *heart*. The more you like him, the more you mustn't let him see it; but, my gracious! you MUSTN'T like him! of course you understand THAT! Shut your eyes to moonlight and starlight; peruse Euclid and *Walker's Dictionary*, (NOT WEBSTER'S!) and *Lives of the Martyrs*, and the Almanac. Don't make your heart soft, reading poetry, or hearing music. *Live low and look high*; redouble your attention to *Mr. Crowe*; drive round as if you hadn't a minute to live; where you used to put *one* stitch in your husband's coat, put a *dozen* now! Take good care of the *little 'Crowes!'* and NEVER let Mr. Crowe go on a journey, in these days of steamboat accidents and railroad collisions! He might *get hurt*, you know! How can you tell? "TISN'T SAFE!"

XXXV.

MRS. FARRINGTON ON MATRIMONY.

FANNY *has* "tried it," and she knows.

"Sambo, what am your 'pinion 'bout de married life? Don't you tink it de most happiest?"

"Well, I'll tell you 'bout dat ere—'pends altogether how dey enjoy themselves."

"Sambo! Sambo! be quiet! You needn't *always* tell the truth. White folks don't. Just as sure as you do it, you'll lose every friend you have.

"Don't roll up the whites of your eyes at me that way. It's gospel I'm telling you. I promise you I don't go through creation with my eyes shut; and I've found out that good people always tell the truth *when it don't conflict with their interests*; and they like to hear it from you when it hits none of their peculiaristicks! There's your chart and compass, so shape your course accordingly.

"I hope you don't intend to insinuate that mat-

rimony isn't paradise! Guess you forget how bewitching they look when they stand up before the minister, promising all sorts of pretty things and afraid to look each other in the eye! Orange wreaths and bouquet de humbug—alabaster kid gloves—hair curled within an inch of their lives—Brummel neck-tie, patent boots, satin slippers and palpitating hearts! Oh, Sambo! can't make *me* believe a cloud ever comes over such a blue sky—no indeed! They're just as contented a twelve month after, as a fly in a spider's web.

"You never saw a husband yet, that wasn't as docile as a lamb *when everything went to his mind*. Don't they always love and cherish their wives as long as there is a timber left of them? Wouldn't they extinguish the lamp of life for any man, or woman, who dare say a word to their dispraise? Would they ever do that same *themselves*? Answer me that?

"And as to wives; they are as easily driven as a flock of sheep when a locomotive comes tearing past. *Oh! y-e-s*, Sambo, matrimony is a 'blessed institution,' so the ministers say, (finds 'em in *fees*, you know!) and so everybody says—except those who have *tried it*? So go away, and don't be *wool*-gathering. You'll never be the 'Uncle Tom' of your tribe."

XXXVI.

A WHISPER TO ROMANTIC YOUNG LADIES.

"A crust of bread, a pitcher of water, a thatched roof, and love,—there's happiness for you."

GIRLS! *that's a humbug!* The very *thought* of it makes me groan. It's all moonshine. In fact, men and moonshine in my dictionary are synonymous.

"Water and a crust! RATHER spare diet! May do for the honey-moon. Don't make much difference *then*, whether you eat shavings or sardines—but when you return to *substantials*, and your wedding dress is put away in a trunk for the benefit of posterity, if you can get your husband to *smile* on anything short of a 'sirloin' or a roast turkey, you are a lucky woman.

"Don't every married woman know that a man is as savage as a New Zealander when he's hungry? and when he comes home to an empty cupboard and meets a dozen little piping mouths, (necessary accompaniments of 'cottages' and 'love,' clamorous for supper, '*Love* will have the *sulks*,' or my name isn't Fanny. Lovers have a trick of getting disenchanted, too, when they see their Aramintas with dresses pinned up round the waist, hair powdered with sweeping, faces scowled up over the wash-tub, and soap-suds dripping from red elbows.

"We know these little accidents never happen in novels—where the heroine is always 'dressed in white, with a rose-bud in her hair,' and lives on blossoms and May dew! There are no wash-tubs or gridirons in *her* cottage; *her* children are born cherubim, with a seraphic contempt for dirt pies and molasses. *She* remains 'a beauty' to the end of the chapter, and 'steps out' just in time to anticipate her first gray hair, her husband drawing his last breath at the same time, as a dutiful husband *should*; and not falling into the unromantic error of outliving his grief, and marrying a second time!

"But this humdrum life, girls, is another affair, with its washing and ironing and cleaning days,

when children expect boxed ears, and visitors picked-up dinners. All the 'romance' there is in it, you can put under a three-cent piece!

"St. Paul says they who marry do well enough, but they who *don't* marry do WELL-ER! Sensible man that. Nevertheless, had *I* flourished in those times, I would have undertaken to change his sentiments; for those old-fashioned gentlemen were worth running after.

"One half the women marry for fear they shall be old maids. Now I'd like to know why an old maid is to be snubbed, any more than an old bachelor? Old bachelors receive 'the mitten,' occasionally, and old maids have been known to *outlive several 'offers.'* They are both useful in their way—particularly old bachelors!

"Now *I* intend to be an old maid;' and I shall found a mutual accommodation society, and admit old bachelors honorary members. They shall wait on *us* evenings, and we'll hem their pocket handkerchers and mend their gloves. No *boys under thirty* to be admitted. Irreproachable dickeys, immaculate shirt-bosoms and faultless boots *indispensible*. Gentlemen always to sit on the *opposite* side of the room—no refreshments but *ices!* *Instant expulsion* the consequence of the first attempt at love-making! No allusion to be made to Moore

or Byron! The little '*bye-laws*' of the society *not* to be published! Moonlight evenings, the sisters are not at home! the moon being considered, from time immemorial, an unprincipled magnetiser!"

XXXVII.

A WOMAN WITH A SOUL.

"A new affectation is to speak of the soul as *feminine*. For example, the London papers announce the third edition of 'The Soul, *HER* sorrows, and *HER* aspirations.'"

I always *thought* John Bull was a goose; now I *know* it! *A woman with a soul!* I guess so! (made out of an old *spare-rib!*) What on earth does *she* want of a *soul*? First thing you know, she'd be eating of the 'tree of knowledge,' and we had enough of that in *Eve's* day; I tell you there are none but *masculine souls*.

"It is a matter of astonishment and thanksgiving to me that *men* condescend to notice *us* at all. I trust all the sisters feel their inferiority, and know how to keep their place, as well as *I* do! It's next door to martyrdom when they speak to *me*, I'm in such a 'fluster' for fear I shall make some

wretched blunder. It is as much as ever I dare to LOOK at them, but when it comes to TALKING, I'm entirely nonplussed! If by good luck I *catch* an idea, I chase it round till I lose it; and if I were to swallow a whole dictionary, I couldn't clothe that idea in words! *Oh, dear! wish I had a 'soul,' just to see how it would seem!* It would be so refreshing to have a *new sensation!*"

XXXVIII.

CLERICAL COURTING.

THE following sketch, published by Mrs. Farrington under the name of Fanny Fern, is a graphic life-picture. We are informed that a worthy gentleman connected with her family by marriage, sat for the portrait of Ephraim.

“Mr. Ephraim Leatherstring labored under the hallucination that he had a call to preach the gospel to the heathen. He had hitherto hid his ‘light under a bushel’ in the worldly occupations of mending fences, felling trees, driving cattle and shoeing horses. Conceiving that the chief qualifications for his new office were *a pair of green spectacles, and a long, petticoat-y, ministerial cloak*, he forthwith equipped himself in this spiritual armor, and presented himself before ‘the Board;’ by

whom, after examination, he was pronounced a perfect—*shingle!* and forthwith set apart for the work.

“His passage was spoken in the Sea-Gull for the Ourang Outang Islands, and his sea-chest duly stored with ‘Village Melodies’ and penny tracts, when it was intimated to him by ‘the Board’ that it would be advisable for him to provide himself with a help-meet before starting. Whether they feared his yoking with an unbeliever, or—well—no matter; any way, two days’ grace were allowed him to find *Mrs. Ephraim Leatherstring*. Letters of introduction to three damsels were given him, whose parents’ principles were known to be ‘dyed in the wool.’

“Now this little matrimonial luxury had not been thought of by Ephraim; or, if it had, was quickly banished from his mind as a temptation of Satan, and quite incompatible with his new calling. However, coming to him recommended by such high authority, ‘Barkis was willing!’

“His first call was upon Miss Charity Church. She was absent on a visit. Unfortunate female!! No chance for *her* to see the Ourang Outang Islands! Ephraim began to feel nervous, for, now he had made up his mind to be a victim, he didn’t like to be disappointed.

"Nothing daunted, he wended his way to Deacon Pettebone's. His daughter Merinda was as round as a barrel and much the same shape, as rosy as an apple and quite as sweet, and had been brought up by *the deacon*, and *that's enough said!* Eph. made known his errand to the deacon, who was highly delighted at the honor about to be conferred on his family, and left him alone with his chubby daughter, not doubting that she would be of the same opinion. Now Ephraim, (spite of his long cloak and green spectacles,) *had* made the acquaintance of *several other* damsels in the course of his earthly pilgrimage; but he knew that this missionary wooing was to be got up on a new principle; so he decorously seated himself in the farthest corner of the room, placed the palms of his hands together, allowing the two forefingers to meet, and began to tell 'his experience,' by way of solemnizing her mind, to all of which Merinda appeared to listen with becoming gravity. He then informed her, that he and 'the Board' had decided to invite her to be his co-worker and fellow-laborer in the Ourang Outang vineyard. Then, peering over his green spectacles at Merinda, who sat stuffing the corners of her checked apron in her mouth, he said, '*Silence gives consent. Let us pray.*' When he arrived at *Amen*, and turned his

head to reward himself with a long look at his future wife, Merinda was among the missing; rolling on the grass at the back part of the house, in a perfect paroxysm of laughter! Eph. had no more time to waste on such a sinner, so he picked himself up, and his cloak was soon seen fluttering in the wind, in the direction of Parson Clutterbuck's.

"Now it was foreordained that Kezia should be the chosen vessel. She was always at home, and there he found her; as straight and perpendicular as if she had swallowed the meeting-house steeple. His errand was soon made known—the form slightly varying from the first order of performances. Kezia straightened down the folds of her stiffly-starched neckerchief, and said meekly, that 'she felt inclined to think it was the path of duty for her;' which Eph. ventured to subscribe to, with the first holy kiss; when he started back in consternation, on observing that her red hair was *curled* around her face. He shook his head ominously, and said, 'he was afraid 'the Board' would think it had a carnal look,'—but upon Kezia's informing him that it was a defect she was *born with*, they made up their minds that a little patience and pomatum might, in time, remove this obstacle to their usefulness, and forthwith embarked on the

sea of matrimony, 'fetching up' at the Ourang Outang Islands, just in the wane of the honeymoon, strong in the belief that the fate of heathen millions, *long since unborn* (as Mrs. Partington might say,) lay in their matrimonial hands."

XXXIX.

WHAT FOWLER SAYS.

FOWLER, the phrenologist, who, probably, never saw Fanny Fern, sanctions and publishes the following from one of her friends—honest John Walter, we suspect. The reader who has perused the preceding pages can judge of its truthfulness :

“ Fanny Fern is the most retiring and unobtrusive of human beings. More than any other celebrity we have ever known, she shrinks from personal display and public observation. During her residence in this city she has lived in the most perfect privacy, never going to parties or soirees, never giving such herself, refusing to enlarge her circle of friends, and finding full employment as well as satisfaction in her domestic and literary duties. She has probably received more invitations to pri-

vate and public assemblies, and her acquaintance has been more frequently sought by distinguished persons, during the period of her residence here, than any other individual. To all solicitations of this kind she returns a mild but decided negative. In the hotels at which she has resided, no one, neither landlord nor guest, has ever known her as Fanny Fern. Indeed, she has an abhorrence of personal publicity, and cannot be persuaded to sacrifice any part of the comfort of an absolute *incog*. We cannot but approve her resolution.

"Fanny Fern is a sincerely religious woman, the member of an evangelical denomination, and a regular attendant at church. We never knew any one who believed in a belief more strongly than she in hers, or who was more deeply grieved when that belief was treated with disrespect. No one stands less in awe of conventionalities, no one is more strict on a point of honor and principle than she. She is a person who is able to do all that she is convinced she ought, and to refrain from doing all that she is sure she ought not. In strength of purpose, we know not her equal among women.

"The word which best describes Fanny Fern is the word Lady. All her ways and tastes are feminine and refined. Everything she wears, every article of furniture in her rooms, all the details of

her table, must be clean, elegant, tasteful. Her attire, which is generally simple and inexpensive, is always exquisitely nice and becoming. In the stormiest days, when no visitor could be expected, she is as carefully dressed and adorned as though she was going to court. We say as carefully, though, in fact, she has a quick instinct for the becoming, and makes herself attractive without bestowing much time or thought upon the matter. Her voice is singularly musical; her manner varies with her humor; but it is always that of a lady. One who knows Fanny Fern has an idea what kind of women they must have been for whom knights-errant did battle in the Middle Ages.

"With all her strength, Fanny Fern is extremely sensitive. She can enjoy more, suffer more, love more, hate more, admire more and detest more, than any one whom we have known. With all her gentleness of manner, there is not a drop of milk and water in her veins. She believes in having justice done. Seventy times and seven she could forgive a repentant brother; but not once, unless he repented.

"Fanny Fern writes rapidly, in a large, bold hand; but she sends no article away without very careful revision; and her manuscript is puzzling to printers from its numberless erasures and inser-

tions. She writes from her heart and her eye; she has little aptitude or taste for abstract thought. She never talks of her writings, and cares little for criticism, however severe. She is no more capable of writing an intentional *double entendre*, than the gross-minded men who have accused her of doing so are capable of appreciating the worth of pure womanhood.

"Such are some of our impressions of Fanny Fern, to which we may add, that she has the finest form of any woman in New York, and that no one of the names recently assigned her in the papers is her true name. In ordinary circumstances, we should not have thought it right thus to describe the characteristics of a lady; our sole, and we think, sufficient justification is, the publication of statements respecting her, only less vulgar than calumnious."

XL.

THE OTHER SIDE.

THE following review of Ruth Hall is from the pen of a talented woman, far above any feelings of pique or jealousy.

"Our first recollections of 'Fanny Fern' are connected with her appearance in the Olive Branch a few years since. We were then entirely ignorant of her real name and position, nor did we, in common with the indifferent public, feel any particular interest or curiosity respecting them. The impression of the careless reader would have been that the spicy scraps bearing this signature were the production of some hoydenish school-girl, ambitious to see her writings in print. With the supposition that they were the work of a young lady, was associated an indefinite, but

slightly painful feeling that the writer was not sufficiently endowed with female delicacy. While a perfect sketch, artistically wrought out, and disfigured by no defects of style or coarse inuendoes, partially filled a column, the same column often contained another article, full of these blemishes. Vulgar expressions and exclamations were often used, though when these writings were afterwards collected and published in a book, these were carefully pruned away. Some judicious friend had evidently guided the pen to strike out phraseology which would have been injurious if not fatal to Fanny's rising fame. Whether this judicious friend was the 'Mr. Tibbetts' through whose agency her first work was introduced to the publishers, who received and forwarded to her all the proofs, reading the whole aloud to her as fast as it appeared in type, we are not able to say. Upon 'Fern Leaves,' and successive volumes, thus carefully pruned of what too plainly revealed a certain coarseness in the habits of thought of the writer, the public has doubtless passed a just verdict. With the fame thus won, and the independence thus secured, would that 'Fanny Fern' had been satisfied.

"We do not intend to attempt an elaborate review of 'Ruth Hall.' As a novel it will not

bear it. We have read it through twice without catching any clew to its merits or intentions as a work of art. Disjointed fragments of what should be a beautiful and complete edifice, are all that meet the eye. As in the newly discovered remains of ancient cities, monstrous faces, caricatures of humanity, glare upon us when we look for 'the human face divine.' One cannot but feel that the mind of the artist must have been itself deformed to have designed such monstrosities. On looking over the preface, we perceive that the author disclaims the intention of writing a novel. We will therefore examine 'Ruth Hall' as an auto-biography.

"A work which appears before the world, heralded as such, with the evident intention of being so understood, should above all else, be distinguished for truth. Exaggerated, instead of correct descriptions, imaginary instead of real conversations and letters, which if genuine, have no point, and if fictitious, no interest, should not have been admitted to its pages. The work abounds in these. If 'Ruth Hall' is 'Fanny Fern,' then the incognito of the latter is forever laid aside. Half the charm attached to her writings has already vanished. She is no longer a 'Maid of the Mist,' whose silvery veil conceals

deformities and enhances beauties, but plain 'Fanny Fern;' and 'Ruth Hall' is 'Fanny Fern' described by herself. Let us look at this description.

" 'Ruth Hall' is not without vanity. In the very first chapter, 'her lithe form had rounded into *symmetry* and *grace*, her slow step had become *light* and *elastic*, her *smile* winning, and her *voice* soft and *melodious*.'

" Again on page 48th.

'It was blessed to see the love light in Ruth's *gentle* eyes; to see the *rose* chase the lily from her cheek; to see the old spring come back to her step; to follow her from room to room while she draped the pretty white curtains, and *beautified unconsciously everything she touched*.'

" We have not space for farther quotations, but must refer our readers to the 59th, 61st, 70th, and other pages of the work, not forgetting the lengthy and flattering phrenological description commencing at page 278.

" Another very striking characteristic of 'Ruth Hall' is her want of filial piety. If we omit the evidences of this, half the book disappears. Whether the parents of her deceased husband, respect for whose memory at least should have restrained her pen, or her own relatives, become

the subjects of her notice, vulgar ridicule and pointless wit are unsparingly lavished upon them. Whatever may have been the faults of those connected with 'Fanny Fern's' past history, a decent self-respect should have withheld her from thus parading them before the world. It is well known to the public that 'Fanny Fern' has been twice married, but all allusion to this circumstance is omitted in 'Ruth Hall.' How are we then to know that this suppressed history may not contain a partial justification of the course pursued by her friends? One intimate with her first husband, long ago informed us that she was a 'poor house-keeper,' and 'did not make him a comfortable home.' We have therefore been half inclined to sympathize with 'Mrs. Hall's' lamentations over the missing accomplishment of bread-making.

"But for infringing on the sacredness of communications intended to be private, we could give a different aspect to other allusions in 'Ruth Hall.' Whatever may have been the defects of 'Hyalcinth Ellet,' he has never publicly failed to 'know his father and his mother.' The gray hairs which 'are a crown of glory when found in the way of righteousness,' should have shielded an aged parent from the irreverent attacks of the daughter, and the hollow cough of an invalid struggling with

a yet more pitiless foe, should have found its way to the heart of the sister. When the clods of the valley shall rest upon the heads of both father and brother, we shall not envy the emotions of 'Fanny Fern.'

" 'Ruth Hall' proves herself capable of ingratitude. Her earliest benefactor, the kind-hearted and benevolent man who first encouraged and rewarded her timid efforts, has not been safe from her attacks, even in the grave. Later friends have been as unhesitatingly deserted and abused. Well may they feel 'how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is, to have a thankless' friend. By the aid of these, she stepped from obscurity into public notice, and now 'has no farther occasion for her stepping-stones.'

" But self-esteem, ingratitude, and want of filial piety, are venial sins compared with the irreverence for things sacred, which sullies the pages of 'Ruth Hall.' The conversation of the dress-maker, that of Mr. Ellet with his ministerial friend, the allusion to Hyacinth's description of the Saviour, with many other briefer passages, had they been written by Dickens, would have been pronounced impious. Written by a professed Christian, what then shall we call them? Filial

disrespect and religious irreverence are blended in almost every page.

"But 'Ruth Hall' is represented as a model woman, and an exemplary Christian. All that 'Fanny Fern's' descriptive talent could do to throw a charm about her character has been done. Whether the defects of the heroine thus unintentionally betrayed, may not lessen our desire to copy this model, we will leave the unprejudiced reader to judge. One deeply read in human nature has said,

" 'Sweet are the uses of adversity
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in its head.'

"Knowing how 'sweet are the uses of adversity' rightly received and improved, we cannot but regret that 'Fanny Fern's' adversity should have left to her so much of the 'venomous.'

"Out of four hundred pages in 'Ruth Hall' seventy-five are entirely blank. Had the remaining pages been left equally so, we believe it would have been better for 'Fanny Fern' and for the world."

XLI.

THE GOOD-NATURED BACHELOR.

THIS individual, Fanny Fern says:—"Is jolly, sleek, and roly-pooly. Lifts all the little school-girls over the mud-puddles, and kisses them when he lands them on the other side. Admires little babies, without regard to the shape of their noses, or the strength of their lungs. Squeezes himself into an infinitesimal fragment, in the corner of an omnibus, to make room for that troublesome individual *one—More!* Vacates his seat any number of times at a crowded lecture, for distressed looking single ladies. Orders stupid cab-drivers off the only dry crossing, to save a pretty pair of feet from immersion, and don't forget to look the other way when their owner gathers up the skirts of her dress to trip across. Is just as civil to a shop-girl as if she were a

Duchess; pays regularly for his newspaper, lends his umbrella and goes home with a wet beaver; has a clear conscience, a good digestion, and believes the women to be all angels with their wings folded up. Here's hoping matrimony may never deceive him! "

XLII.

CATCHING THE DEAR.—BY FANNY FERN.

"A Roman lady who takes a liking to a foreigner does not cast her eyes down when he looks at her, but fixes them upon him long and with evident pleasure. If the man of her choice feels the like sentiment, and asks—'Are you fond of me?' she replies with the utmost frankness, 'Yes, my dear.'"

YOU double-distilled little simpleton! don't you know better than that? Don't you know that courtship is like a vast hunting party?—*all the pleasure lies in the pursuit?* That the sport is all over when the *deer* is caught? Certainly; you don't catch an American girl 'doing as the Romans do.' She understands the philosophy of the thing, and don't drop down like a shot pigeon at the first arrow from Cupid's quiver. If she is wounded ever so bad, she spreads her wings and flies off,

alighting here, there, and everywhere; leading her pursuer through bog, ditch and furrow; sometimes flapping her bright wings close to his face, and then, out of sight—the mischief knows where—to return again the next minute. In this way she finds out how much trouble he is willing to take for her; and the way he knows how to prize her when she is caught would astonish your Roman comprehension, my dear.

“Now, I never saw a masculine Roman, but I will just tell you, in passing, that American gentlemen go by the rule of contraries. If there are any of them whom you desire *most particularly not to be bored with*, all you have to do is to make a pretence of the most *intense* desire for their acquaintance; and vice-versa.

“Bless my soul! you haven’t got so far as A, B, C; you are in an *awful* benighted state for a female. I labored under the impression that the Foreign Mission Society had attended to the evangelization of Rome. I’ll have some ‘col-porteurs’ sent over, without loss of time—you little verdant Abigail! saying ‘yes, my dear,’ the minute you are ‘looked at!’ If I hadn’t so many irons in the fire I’d attend to your education myself, you poor, ignorant little heathen!”

XLIII.

HELEN, THE VILLAGE ROSE-BUD.

THE following tearful sketch was contributed by Fanny Fern to the True Flag, under the name of 'Olivia.' It is one of Fanny's sweetest efforts.

"You couldn't help loving our 'Village Rosebud.' Not because she was beautiful, though those pouting lips and deep blue eyes were fair to see; nor because her form had caught the grace of the waving willow; nor for the gleaming brightness of her golden hair. But because her sable dress bespoke your tender pity for the orphan; and for the thousand little nameless acts of love and kindness, prompted by her gentle and affectionate heart.

"The first sweet violets that opened their blue eyes to greet the balmy spring, the earliest fruits

of summer, and autumn's golden favors, were laid as trophies at her feet. For each and all, she had a gentle, kindly word, and a beaming smile; none felt that their offerings would be overlooked or slighted, because they were unpretending.

"Helen Gray's means and home were humble, but the apartment she occupied in the house of the kind Widow More might have vied for taste and comfort with many more expensively furnished. The tasteful arrangement of a few choice books and pictures; the flower-stand, with its wealth of sweet blossoms; the tiny porcelain vase, that daily chronicled the hopes of her rustic admirers as expressed in the shape of rose-buds, heart's-ease, mignonette, and the like; the snowy curtain, looped gracefully away from the window, over which the wild-rose and honey-suckle formed a fairy frame for the sweet face that so often bewildered the passing traveller—many an hour did she sit there, watching the fleecy cloud; the fragrant meadow, through which the tiny stream wound like a thread of silver; the waving trees, with their leafy music; the church, with its finger of faith pointing to Heaven; and the village graveyard, where were peacefully pillowed the gray-haired sire and loving mother, whom she still

mourned; and each and all wound their own spell around the heart and fancy of the orphan Helen.

"But there is yet another spell that holds her in its silken fetters. Ah, little Helen! by those morning walks and star-lit rambles, by that rose fresh with dew, glittering amid your ringlets, by those dainty little notes, that bring such a bright flush to your cheek and add such lustre to your eyes; you are a *plighted* maiden.

"Harry Lee knew well how to woo, and win 'the village rose-bud.' Master of a handsome fortune, he had early exhausted all the sources of enjoyment to be found in his native city. For the last three years he had been a voluntary exile in foreign lands; he had daguerreotyped upon his memory all that was grand, majestic and lovely, in natural beauty; all that was perfect in painting and sculpture. He had returned home, weary in the search of pleasure, sick of artificial manners and etiquette, longing for something that would interest him.

"In such a mood he met Helen. Her naive manners, her innocent and childish beauty, captivated his fancy. He was rich enough to be able to please himself in the choice of a wife, and the orphan's sweet gentleness gave promise of a ready compliance with every selfish desire. As to Helen,

she had only her own heart to ask. All the villagers thought 'Mr. Lee was such a *handsome* man.' *Mr. Lee thought so himself.*

"Fair and bright shone the sun on Helen's bridal morning! No father, nor mother, nor brother, nor sister, were there to give the young bride away. She had yielded her innocent and guileless heart without a fear for the future. Her simple toilette required little care. The golden tresses, the graceful, symmetrical figure, the sweet face, over which the faint blush flitted with every passing emotion, could gain nothing by artificial adornment.

"Helen could have been happy with her husband in a far less costly, less luxurious home; but well did she grace its fair halls. Her perfect and intuitive tact served her in place of experience of the gay world. Her husband was amused as well as gratified at her ease and self-possession, and marked with pride the world's admiration of his choice.

"It is needless to say how the orphan's heart went out to him who was *all* to her. With what fond pride she looked up to him whom she believed to be all that was noble, good and true—how delicately she anticipated every wish, and dissipated by her sunny brightness every cloud of care.

"How perfect and far-sighted that Wisdom that shrouds the future from our sight! Who among us, with rude hand, would willingly draw back the dark curtain, and palsy the hearts now beating high with hope and promise?

"Time passed on, and Helen had another claimant for her love. Never was infant so caressed by a doating mother; never one whose little lamp of life needed such careful watching lest it should be extinguished.

"Helen looked in vain to read in her husband's eyes the love she felt for her child. Its cries were intolerable to him, and the quiet and tedium of a sick-room annoying to the last degree. He missed the light step that bounded to meet him on his return, the bright face that smiled upon him at their quiet meal, the touch of fairy fingers on his heated brow. He thought not of a mother's pain; he felt no gratitude for the life that had been spared him; he had no admiration for the patient devotion of the young mother. He took not into account the monotony of a sick-room to a nervous, excitable temperament like Helen's; he looked not beyond his own selfish feelings.

"Helen was grieved, yet she would not admit to herself that Harry had changed. She made an effort to appear stronger and brighter than she

really was, and in the unselfishness of her love she said, 'It must be *I* who have changed; I will yet win him back to me.' But her babe was feeble, and required much of her time, and Harry's brow would cloud with displeasure when the eyes of his gentle wife would fill with tears; then with an impatient 'pshaw!' he would leave the room, 'wondering what nurses were made for, if they couldn't keep babies from being a bore.'

"Poor Helen! All this told upon her feeble health and spirits; she became nervous and hysterical, and trembled when she heard Harry's footsteps. She consulted her glass to see if sickness had robbed her of the charms that had won him. Still it reflected back the same wealth of golden hair, the fair, pure brow, the sweet blue eyes. The rose had faded from her cheek, 'tis true, but that would bloom again with exercise and fresh air; and so she redoubled her attentions, patiently counting the tedious hours of his unwonted absence, nor met him with an ungentle word or look of reproach on his return.

"Helen had often met, at the house of a friend of Harry's, a young widow lady by the name of Melville. One day her husband told her that he wished an invitation to be sent to her to make

them a visit, adding, 'she will cheer you up and help you appear more like yourself again.'

"The next week found Norah Melville their guest. Married at the age of nineteen to a man the age of her father, she found herself a year after a widow, with unimpaired beauty, and a fortune sufficiently ample to cover every want or desire. She had a thorough knowledge of human nature, and was a perfect woman of the world. Her figure was tall and queenly, she had large liquid black eyes, a complexion of marble paleness, a profusion of raven black hair, and a voice like the wind-harp in its sweetness. She knew that eyes like hers were made for *use*, and she *acted upon that principle*.

"Nothing could exceed her kindness to Helen, who only saw that her husband's old glad smile had come back again, and that he was once more gay and cheerful.

"Mrs. Melville sang them all her choicest songs, always appeared in an unexceptionable toilette, displayed a foot equal to Cinderella's, and was, by turns, pensive or gay, thoughtful or witty, brilliant or sad; but in all *bewitching*!

"Helen could see nothing exceptionable in her manners or conversation, and agreed with the rest of her admirers that she was a 'splendid woman.'

"One day, as they sat at dinner, a proposal was made by Harry that they should attend the theatre that evening. Helen dared not leave her child until so late an hour, but begged them not to stay at home on her account. When the hour arrived she herself placed the spotless camelia in Mrs. Melville's raven hair, clasped the glittering diamond bracelet upon her fair, round arm, and went back, in the guilelessness of her trusting heart, to her child's cradle.

"At length, weary with its restlessness, she threw herself upon the bed and sank into a deep slumber. She dreamed of the flower-wreathed cottage where her childhood was passed, and in fancy she roamed with Harry in the sweet meadows, and revisited the old trysting-place under the trees by the river side, and heard his words of passionate love as in those golden days. She awoke and found the hour was late for Harry's return. Descending the stairs, she bent her footsteps toward the parlor.

"Transfixed, spell-bound, what has hushed the tread of those tiny, slipperless feet upon the soft carpet?

"The moonbeams fell brightly through the large bay window upon the fair Norah. Her opera-cloak had fallen carelessly at her side, displaying

her matchless neck and snowy arms. Her eyes, those speaking, *bewildering* eyes, were bent upon Harry, who sat on a low ottoman at her feet. His hair was pushed carelessly back from his broad white brow, and Helen was no stranger to the look with which he gazed upon Mrs. Melville. Musically slow, but with dreadful distinctness, fell upon her ear the words,

“‘Norah, I love you.’

“In that short sentence was compressed for the gentle wife the agony of death. None but those who have given a warm, living heart into unworthy keeping, may know such torture.

“Helen spoke not, nor gave other sign of her presence. Slowly, mechanically, she returned to her room, and, as she sank into a chair, the words ‘My God, pity me!’ were wrung from her soul’s anguish.

“When Harry returned, she sat cold and pale, swaying her figure gently to and fro, slowly repeating,

“‘Norah, I love you! Norah, I love you!’

“In the lunatic asylum of —, may now be seen ‘the Village Rosebud.’ God forgive the careless hand that so rudely plucked its fresh beauty, but to blight its fair promise, and cast it aside as a withered thing.

"The world still takes by the hand, as an honorable man, the gay Harry Lee; but, in the still midnight hour, a gentle, tearful voice, slowly repeats to his ear alone, amid unquiet slumbers, the words,—‘*Norah, I love you !*’ ”

XLIV.

SINGLE BLESSEDNESS.

WHAT a cheerful, happy, self-congratulating old maid was lost when Fanny became a wife. Only read this extract:—

“‘All articles of gentlemen’s wearing apparel made—to ORDER.’

“Saints and angels! only think of that! Well, thank a kind Providence I never was married. No tyrannical frock-coats, or ‘dress-coats,’ or Petershams, profane my closets. No vests, or stocks, or dickies crowd my nice laces, and ribbons, and muslins. No overbearing cane keeps company with my silken parasolette. No lumbering great boots tread on the toes of my little slippers and gaiters. Nobody kicks my spinster foot under the table to stop me in the middle of a sentence that I’m bent upon finishing. Nothing on the wide earth that’s ‘*made to order*,’ finds admittance into my single-blessed territories. I should be all teeth and claws if there did!”

XLV.

THAT MRS. JONES.

WE don't quite agree with Fanny in thinking women ought to bear all the blame. Eve never would have thought of stealing apples, if Adam hadn't been in a hurry for his supper. But in this instance Mrs. Jones *was* wrong. This is the story, as Fanny tells it:

“‘Heaven be praised for Sunday,’ said Mrs. Jones; ‘when omnibus horses and women can rest from their labors. Mr. Jones? Bless my soul, the man has gone;’ and she raised herself on her elbow, and pushed back the ruffled border of her night-cap, as if to make quite sure of her single blessedness. ‘Tommy?’ said she, to a little trundle-bed occupant; ‘here, Tommy, you always know everything you ought *not* to; where’s your father?’

"‘Oh, he went off an hour since,’ said the urchin; ‘took his money-trunk and went down street.’

"Mrs. Jones leaped into the middle of the floor, examined the contents of wardrobe and closets. Yes—his clothes were all there; she couldn’t decide whether she was a ‘California widow’ or not; the chances were about even.

"‘Six little mouths to feed,’ said she; ‘house-rent to pay, and myself to keep out of mischief. Shouldn’t have minded *his* going, if he hadn’t kidnapped that money-trunk; he was getting dyspeptic and fussy, *rather* inclining to be *ancient*,’ and she shook out her curls from under her cap, and attempted to finish her breakfast toilette.

"‘T-o-m-m-y Jones,’ said she; ‘leave off shaving that cat, with your father’s razor. Do you know what day it is?’

"‘Well, you’d better ask father,’ said the young hopeful ‘There he is, coming up the street with a money-trunk in his hand, of a Sunday morning.’

"‘M-r. Jo-n-e-s,’ said his spouse, as that gentleman came in, and walking so close up to him that their noses touched—‘*have you been imbibing?* What did you get up so early for? and where on earth have you been? and *which* way did you go? and what have you been about? Make haste, and

tell me! Pretty example for you to set this baptized Tommy—to be running round, Sunday morning, before sunrise, with a money-trunk under your arm. What do you suppose our minister'll think?'

"*Sunday morning!*" said Jones, rubbing his forehead—"Sunday morning! That accounts! Couldn't think, for the life of me, why there wasn't a window-shutter taken down in the street. Been down to the store, as true as I'm a sinner; made the fire; opened the shutters, and hung out all the calicoes and ribbons and streamers I could find. *Sunday Morning!* Well, it's all *your* fault, Mrs. Jones; how was *I* to know? You didn't have *salt fish* for dinner, yesterday, though it was Saturday—that's the only way I know when Sunday comes. Shouldn't make innovations, Mrs. Jones; it's all your fault. There never was a commandment broke yet, that *a woman* wasn't at the bottom of it."

XLVI.

MRS. JUPITER'S SOLILOQUY, TAKEN
DOWN IN SHORT-HAND.—BY FANNY
FERN.

SITTING is the only posture for deliberation. Certainly. Don't 'the House' always 'sit' when any national egg is hatching? The philosophy and naturalness of the maxim is unmistakably obvious. It accounts, too, for something I've never been able to comprehend, viz., how in the name of all that's astounding I became Mrs. Jonas Jupiter. I was not sitting when Jonas laid his moustache at my feet. If the Legislature would give me a chance to reconsider the subject, gunpowder shouldn't take me off my chair till I did it ample justice. Jonas probably knew what he was about, when he imposed on my simplicity that way. Nicodemus! to think I should have

made such a life-time mistake, all for want of a chair! My veneration for furniture will be on the progressive for the future. I incline to the opinion that men are exceedingly artful. It's surprising how like Moses they can *talk*, and how like Judas they can *act*. If it wasn't that I'm bound to collect their mental skeletons to hang up in my dissecting-room, I should eschew the whole sex. But 'tis a pretty little amusement to the female naturalist to label the different specimens. As far as my scientific research extends, they have one defect in common, viz., that where the heart should be, there is a decided vacuum. It is a trifling oversight of Dame Nature's which her elbow should be jogged to rectify in her future productions. This little amendment in the masculine organization would be excruciatingly refreshing to the female lover of variety. No amount of brains, in my opinion, is an equivalent for this omission, but when heart and brains are *both lacking*!—saints and angels, what an abortion!"

XLVII.

THE UNFAITHFUL LOVER.

WE quote, by permission, from the files of the True Flag, a second sketch, contributed to its columns, by Olivia, *alias* Fanny Fern.

"Kate Stanley was a brilliant, sparkling brunette. Wo to the rash youth who exposed his heart to *her* fascinations! If he were not annihilated by the witching glance of her bright eye, he would be sure to be caught by the dancing dimple that played 'hide-and-seek' so roguishly in her rosy cheek, or the little rounded waist that supported her faultless bust, or the tiny feet that crept, mice-like, in and out from under the sweeping folds of her silken robe.

"I am sorry to say, Miss Kitty was an *arrant coquette*. She angled for hearts with the skill of a

practised sportsman, and was never satisfied till she saw them quivering and bleeding at her feet; *then*, they might flounce and flutter, and twist and writhe at their leisure, it was no farther concern of *hers*. She was off for a new subject.

"One fine morning she sat listlessly in her boudoir, tapping one little foot upon the floor, and sighing for a new sensation, when a note was handed her. It ran thus :

"DEAR KITTY:—Our little cottage home is looking lovely, this 'leafy June.' Are you not weary of city life? Come and spend a month with us, and refresh heart and body. You will find nothing *artificial* here, *save yourself*!

'Yours, NELLY.'

"'Just the thing,' said Kitty, 'but the girl must be crazy, or intolerably vain, to bring me into such close contact with her handsome lover—I might as well try to stop breathing as to stop flirting, and the *country* of *all* places, for a flirtation! The girl must be *non-compos*; however, it's her own affair, not mine;' and she glanced triumphantly at her beautiful face, and threaded her jewelled fingers through her long ringlets, and conquered him—in *imagination*!

"'When do you expect your friend?' said a

laughing young girl to Nelly. 'From the descriptions I have had of her, your bringing her here, will be something akin to the introduction of Satan into Paradise. You wouldn't find *me* guilty of such a folly, were I engaged to your handsome Fitz. Now you know, Nelly dear, that although you are fascinating and intellectual, you have no pretensions to beauty, and there are few men who prize a gem unless it is *handsomely set*, however great its value. Now be warned in time, and send him off on a pilgrimage till her visit is over. *I* won't bet on his constancy !'

" 'On the contrary,' said Nelly, as she rose slowly from the little couch where she was reclining, and her small figure grew erect and her large eyes lustrous, 'I would marry no man who could not pass through such an ordeal and remain true to me. I am, as you see, hopelessly plain and ungraceful ; yet, from my earliest childhood, I have been a passionate worshipper of beauty. I never expected to win love—I never expected to marry—and when Fitz, with all his glorious beauty, sued for my hand, I could not convince myself that it was not all a bewildering dream. It was such a temptation to a heart so isolated as mine ; and eloquently it plead for itself. When I drank in the music of his voice, I said, 'surely I must be

lovely in *his* eyes; else why has he sought me?' Then, in my solitary moments, I said, sadly, 'there are none to dispute the prize with me here. He is deceiving himself; he is only in love with nature and the beautiful about us. He has mistaken his own heart.' Then again, I would ask myself, 'can nothing but *beauty* win a noble heart? are all my intellectual gifts valueless?' And still, Fitz unable to understand my contradictory moods, passionately urged his suit. It needed not that waste of eloquence; my heart was already captive. And now, by the intensity of that happiness of which I know myself to be capable, I will prove him. Kate's beauty—Kate's witchery, shall be the test! If his heart remains loyal to me, I am his. 'If not—' and her cheek grew pale, and large tears gathered slowly in her eyes—'I have saved myself a deeper misery.'

"Fitz Allan 'had travelled,' and that is generally understood to mean to go abroad and remain a period of time long enough to grow a fierce beard and fiercer moustache, and cultivate a thorough contempt for everything in your own country. This was not true of Fitz Allan. It had only bound him the more closely to home and friends. His splendid person and cultivated manners had been a letter of recommendation to him

in cultivated society. He was no fop, and yet he was fully aware of these personal advantages. (What handsome man is not?) He had trophies of all kinds, to attest his skillful generalship; such as dainty satin slippers, tiny kid gloves, faded roses, ringlets of all colors, ebony, flaxen and auburn, and *bijouterie* without limit.

Happy Fitz! What spell bound thee to the plain, but loveable Nelly? A nature essentially feminine; a refined, cultivated taste; a warm, passionate heart. Didst thou remember when thou listenedest to that most musical of musical voices, and sat hour after hour, magnetised by its rare witchery as it glanced gracefully and skillfully from one topic to another, that its possessor had not the grace and beauty of a Hebe or a Venus?

"It was a bright, moonlight evening. Fitz and Nelly were seated in the little rustic parlor opening upon the piazza. The moon shone full upon Kate, as she stood in the low door-way. Her simple white dress was confined at the waist by a plain, silken cord. Her fair, white shoulders rose gracefully from the snowy robe. Her white arms, as they were crossed upon her breast, or raised above her head to catch playfully the long tendrils of the woodbine, as the wind swept them past her forehead, gleamed fair in the moonlight, and each

and all had their bewildering charm. She seated herself upon the low door-step. Song after song was borne upon the air. Her eyes now flashing with the enthusiasm of an Improvisatrice—then soft, and lustrous, and liquid, and—dangerous! Nelly's heart beat quick—a deep crimson spot glowed upon her cheek, and, for once, *she* was beautiful.

“Kate, apparently, took but little notice of the lovers, but not an expression that flitted across the fine face of Fitz Allan passed unnoticed by her. And she said proudly to herself—‘*I have conquered him!*’

“And so the bright summer months passed by, and they rambled through the cool woods and rode through the winding paths and sang to the quiet stars in the dim, dewy night.

* * * * *

“‘Fie! Mr. Fitz Allan! What would Nelly say, to see you kneeling here at my feet? You forget you are an affianced lover,’ said the gay beauty, as she mockingly curled her rosy lip; ‘when you address such flattering language to *me!*’

“‘I only know that you are *beautiful as a dream,*’ said the bewildered Fitz, as he passionately kissed the jewelled hand that lay unresistingly in his own.

"That night Fitz might be seen pacing his room with rapid strides, crushing in his hands a delicate note, in which was written these words :

" 'The *moon looks on many brooks ;*
The *brook sees but one moon.*'

'Farewell!

'NELLY.' "

XLVIII.

PETTICOAT PARLIAMENT.

“ ‘ We must do our aspiring sisters the justice to say that several of them made very good speeches, and manifested a real talent for debate *quite equal* to that displayed by half the he-fellows we send to Congress. * * * We opine nothing serious will come of these Women’s Rights’ Conventions. If it amuses the darlings, to insist upon doing their own voting and fighting, let ’em talk on. If they go too far we can adopt measures and *compel them to do their own kissing!* They must have recreation of some kind, and this is a good substitute for fancy balls, expensive millinery, &c. *Strong-minded women have a soul above buttons.* Let the blessed angels weep and resolve if it relieves their minds.’ ”—*New York Sunday Times.*

NOW I’ll wager a pair of new kid gloves that the writer of the above article is a *whole-souled, loveable, handsome son of Adam.* If all the men were like him the women would lay down *their* arms and take *his!*—there’d be no more drumming up recruits for petticoat parliaments—they’d ‘resolve’ to stay at home and ‘do as they oughter.’

I think there should be a *raffle* for him! (You don't find such a man every day!) He takes a liberal view of things—you don't catch *him* but toning his coat up to his chin, folding his arms, strutting round and looking daggers at us, like the rest of the men. No, he isn't on the 'anxious seat'—*HE* isn't! He just takes off his hat to us, like a gentleman, and says, with an irresistible smile:—'Dear ladies—there's a soft place in your hearts *somewhere*, after all. *Who's afraid!* Your gunpowder plots will all end in smoke! Three cheers for the ladies!' Now *THAT'S* doing the thing handsomely.

"Nobody but a *very* 'wiry sister' could hold out against such an incarnation of good-humored gallantry. It's only the *bad husbands* who see their own ugly *mental* phizes in the looking-glass these 'female philanthropesses' hold up to them, that raise such a breeze about it. 'It's only the *truth* that wounds,' as the French proverb says.

"If *I* had been of that convention, I should just draw off my glove, shake hands with that 'Sunday Times' writer, and sign an *everlasting and repentant* recantation of all incendiary resolutions,—now, henceforth and forever! Pass him round; send us a lock of his hair!—give us his daguerreo-type!"

XLIX.

FANNY FERN ON WIDOWERS.

“‘Is this the *heart* that beat so tenderly for Sarah; yea, and for Anna afterwards, and then for Maria, and in the course of time for Margaret Jane!’”—*True Flag*.

AS Cupid is your witness, the very same! Why not? No computing the times a *masculine* heart can be damaged, repaired, cracked, broken, mended, and be just as good as new! How often it can be tossed, like a shuttlecock, from one fair hand to another, and lose none of its freshness or intrinsic value. How *fervently* it can adore *every* daughter of Eve the sun shines upon! How instantaneous may be the transition from the dirge note of sorrow to ‘Love’s Quickstep!’ How unnecessary it is, to be off with the *old* love, before it is on with the *new*.

“Oh! it is an exhaustless fountain, that heart!

No bounds to its capacities! A widower, whose wives had been 'legion,' was once heard to say:—
'The more I loved my Elenore, the more I loved my Mary; the more I loved my Mary, the more I loved my Anna;' &c. Imagination fails me to picture, at this rate of progression, the '*unwritten*' *felicity* of the LAST feminine, on the marital list! Venus! the very thought paralyzes my pen!"

L.

AN HOUR WITH FANNY'S FATHER.

SINCE the previous pages were prepared, we have been favored with an interesting history of a recent interview with Fanny Fern's father, by a gentleman of Boston, upon whose statements implicit reliance may be placed.

As any facts relating to the venerable parent of so distinguished a woman as Fanny, must be of interest to the public, we have concluded to devote a chapter to a condensed account of the interview in question.

Deacon Willis was found at his office in School-street, at an early hour on a winter morning, engaged in looking over some business matters with his book-keeper. The veteran publisher is described as a person rather below the medium stature; gray-haired and feeble; slightly bent with

age and care; dressed in a sober suit of black, with white cravat, and spectacles.

The conversation turning upon "Ruth Hall," the old gentleman shook his head sadly. Had he read the book? Oh, no! he had not the heart to do that. He had understood that he was abused in it; but at his time of life, with the gates of eternity drawing so near, and the world receding so fast behind him, he felt no desire to know what an ungrateful child would say of him. As far as he could learn, the book had been read by none of his family: they passed it by, as children shun a reptile in their path. But he had seen notices of it in the newspapers, from which he had learned something concerning Fanny's treatment of her relatives. It was needless for him to say how unjust that treatment was. He had no defence to make. And as for retaliation—he was still her father; she was his child; he grieved not on his own account, but for her sake—not because evil was said of him in his old age, but because it was in her heart to say it: what retaliation then could he seek?

This last was not the first, nor by any means the greatest trial Fanny had caused her parents. From her girlhood, she had been a wild and troublesome child. A total disregard for the feel-

ings of others, was a distinguishing characteristic of her disposition. Selfish and wilful, all attempts to control her, excited only passion and spite. No pains had been spared to soften and tame her. The most celebrated teachers were employed. Not only did Miss Catherine E. Beecher try her skill upon her, but schools at Pittsfield, Mass., at Londonderry, N. H., and at several other places, were patronized, one after the other, with quite indifferent success. At the termination of each fruitless effort to mould her character, Miss Fanny was returned, wild and wilful as ever, upon her parents' hands.

In the course of conversation, Fanny's complaints of neglect and cruelty on the part of her friends, were alluded to. Again the old man shook his head sorrowfully. These complaints, he said, were utterly without foundation; and to this statement he added a fact, which Fanny and her advisers will find it difficult to put out of sight. During the brief widowhood of the self-styled "Ruth Hall," her own father alone, paid out money to the amount of eight hundred dollars, for her support. For this, Mr. Willis can show receipts. Add an equal sum contributed by her husband's father, and we have not less than sixteen hundred

dollars—certainly a snug little pension for Ruth and her children to starve upon.

In this connection, the old gentleman had occasion to remark, that, had he been less liberal in the education and support of his children, he might not now be compelled to go early in the morning to his office, and remain late in the afternoon in all sorts of weather, exerting his feeble strength to obtain a livelihood, at an age when quiet and rest from toil are most to be desired.

Instead of becoming less troublesome to her friends as she grew older, Fanny seemed to acquire with years additional power to harass and distress them. At last came her separation from Mr. Farrington, accompanied with inexpressible mortification and pain to her family.

“Notwithstanding her rash and undutiful conduct they once more came to her relief, and she was permitted to draw the same pension as when a widow. She now commenced writing for the papers, and under the stimulus of her first success as an authoress, assumed an air of insufferable insolence toward the old man, who, all her life, had borne so patiently with her temper. More than once she had angrily charged him with falsehood to his face. Her letters to him were foolishly

impertinent. It was with reluctance and grief that Deacon Willis spoke of these things; but they seemed wrung from him by a powerful sense of the wrongs which had been heaped upon his head.

When, at length, it was well known that Mrs. Farrington was in the receipt of liberal pay from the newspapers for which she wrote, her father warned her, that, if she sent him any more such unwomanly and unfilial notes as generally accompanied her applications for money, her pension would be stopped. She defied him, and the threat was carried into execution. And now Fanny has sought her revenge.

The old man spoke affectionately of his son, Mr. N. P. Willis, whose touching tribute to his father has been recently published. Throughout the interview he had shown a subdued and Christian temper, uttering unpleasant truths "more in sorrow than in anger." It was affecting to listen to him; and our informant states, that on coming away, the reflection that this was the man whom the "Old Ellet" in Fanny's book was intended to caricature—a fact he had quite lost sight of—excited a revulsion of feeling, which he devoutly wished might be experienced by a few of the adorers of poor, abused "Ruth Hall."

LI

JOHN BULL'S OPINION OF RUTH HALL.

WE clip the following critique on "Ruth Hall" from the columns of the Albion, an able organ of English sentiment.

"There are some books of which it is difficult to speak as one could wish, for a variety of reasons. *Ruth Hall* is such a one. We have watched the career of Fanny Fern from the first, and have seen but little in it to commend. Suddenly elevated to a pinnacle of popularity, she has demeaned herself as no right-minded woman should have done, and no sensitive-minded woman could have done—throwing out insinuations, that she was a very ill-used woman; that her family neglected her; and finally, that she 'had no family.' Her 'Fern Leaves,' of which two series are before the public, are more

or less an expansion of these or of congenial ideas—neglected wives and sisters, hard-hearted fathers and uncles, fatherless and suffering children, and young but talented authoresses seeking a livelihood by the pen, forming the bulk of the work. 'Ruth Hall' harps on the same strings; showing how Ruth Hall got married; how Mr. Hall died; how Mr. Hall's 'aged parents,' and the blood relatives of Ruth Hall, *née* Ellet, chattered about helping her in her time of need, and how they didn't; how she took to authorship, and wrote in the newspapers under the signature 'Floy;' how she became famous, and humbled her brother Hyacinth, who had the good sense to discourage her from the first; and how she has a friend in the person of a Mr. Walter. This, and more of the same sort, is the plot of 'Ruth Hall.' The book is ostensibly published as a novel; but is intended—if general report may be believed—as an autobiography of Fanny Fern herself. If designed for a novel, it is clumsy in construction, and full of false sentiment and questionable morality. If meant for an autobiography, it is a piece of malice and impertinence. Admitting—what we do not for a moment believe—the truth of the narrative, we see no reason why it should be published, but many excellent ones why it should not. An old

proverb says, 'there is a skeleton in every family.' It does not become this egotistical and querulous dame, if she have one in hers, to parade it before the world. It would be wiser to shut the door on it. Such a book as this will win its writer some praise—for there is talent in it—and give her even more notoriety than she appears to possess. We cannot, however, say that on the whole it is creditable to the female head or the female heart."

LII.

ORTHODOX TESTIMONY.

THE Congregational Journal, Concord, N. H., concludes a somewhat severe review, in the following emphatic manner:—

“The chapter wanting in the life of ‘Ruth Hall,’ perhaps could be furnished by Mr. Samuel P. Farrington, of Chicago, Ill., if he was her second husband till he obtained a divorce from her; and that such is the fact, who will deny? Who that knows will take the responsibility of denying that ‘Ruth Hall’ alias ‘Fanny Fern,’ is the daughter of Deacon Nathaniel Willis, of Boston, and that N. P. Willis is her brother? And who will deny that her first husband was a Mr. Eldredge, whose father was a physician, and is now dead? Is not the ‘old Doctor’ the father of ‘Harry?’ Is not

'Mr. Ellet' the father of 'Ruth,' and is not 'Hyacinth' her brother? are questions which she will not answer in the negative. We shall not ourselves attempt any description of this book, but having knowledge of some facts in the history of its author, and believing that the outlines above quoted are just, we have encumbered our columns with the matter. If by so doing, we shall be the means of increasing the readers of 'Ruth Hall,' the responsibility of reading such an abominable production will rest on themselves and not us."

LIII.

ANOTHER FERN.

I'VE been reading the Bible, to-day, and it strikes me that our foremothers were not very correct old ladies. Who flirted with the old serpent? How came Sampson's hair cut off and his peepers extinguished? Who perforated Jael's head with tenpenny nails? How came Jonah sent on a whale-ing voyage? Who helped Ananias tell fibs? Who put Job up to swearing? Who raised a perfect hurricane in good old Abram's house! Who danced John the Baptist's head off his shoulders, hey? I'd like to have you notice (that's all,) what a stock we all sprung from.

"If *they* weren't tee-totally depraved, may I never find out which of 'em I descended from! They didn't seem to have the least consideration for future generations 'long since unborn.' Now

I don't calculate, myself, to feel responsible for *their* capers. I've read somewhere, in Byron, I believe, that every washtub must stand on its own pedestal! (or something like that.) I don't believe in saddling my shoulders with their old-fashioned transgressions.

"Curious, though, isn't it? the mischief women make in the world? Great pity Noah hadn't set Mrs. Noah *adrift* when he 'took one of each kind in the ark.'" I should rather have stood my chance for a ducking, than to have been shut up with such a 'promiskus' men-agerie. Noah was a worthy old gentleman. No mention made of his getting tipsy but *once*, I believe."

Nota Bene.—We cannot help being a little amused at Fanny's comical want of Scriptural information. Our Bible represents Jael as a *woman*, not by any means "perforated with tenpenny nails," though she did try the "perforating" experiment with excellent success, on the head of Sisera "the captain of Jabin's army." Oh, wondrous Fanny, those early Sabbath-school lessons must have been long ago forgotten!

LIV.

"THE BEST OF MEN HAVE THEIR
FAILINGS."

FANNY doesn't think so. She expresses her opinion as follows:—

"I wish I could ever take up a paper that endorsed my liberal sentiments. I've always warped to the opinion that good men were as safe as homœopathic pills. You don't suppose they ever patronize false words or false weights, false measures or false yardsticks? You don't suppose they ever slander their neighbors after making a long-winded exhortation in a vestry meeting? You don't suppose they ever lift their beavers to a long purse, and turn their backs on a thread-bare coat? You don't suppose they ever bestow a

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charity to have it trumpeted in the newspapers?
You don't suppose when they trot devoutly to
meeting twice a day on Sunday, that they over-
haul their ledgers in the intermission? You don't
suppose they ever put doubtful-looking bank bills
in the contribution box? You don't suppose they
ever pay their minister's salary in consumptive
hens and damaged turkies? I wish people were
not so uncharitable and suspicious. It disgusts me
with human nature.

"Now if I once hear a man make a prayer, that's enough said. After that, Gabriel couldn't make me believe he was a sinner. If his face is of an orthodox length, and his creed is dyed in the wool, I consider him a prepared subject for the undertaker. If his toes are on an evangelical platform, I am morally certain his eyes never will go on a 'Tom Fool's errand.' If he has a proper reverence for a church-steeple, I stake my life on it, his conduct will be perpendicular. I should be perfectly willing to pin my faith on his sleeve till the final consummation of all things. Yes, I've the most unswerving, indestructible, undying confidence in any man who owns a copy of Watts' Psalms and Hymns. Such a man *never* trips, or if he does, you never catch him at it!"

LV.

THE MISTAKE OF A LIFE-TIME.

IN a very different spirit the following sketch was written:—

“A lover’s quarrel! A few hasty words, a formal parting between two hearts, that neither time nor distance could ever disunite; then—a lifetime of misery!

“Edith May stood before me in her bridal dress. The world was to be made to believe she was happy and heart-whole. I knew better. I knew that no woman who had once loved Gilbert Ainslie could ever forget him; least of all such a heart as Edith’s. She was pale as a snow-wreath; and bent her head as gracefully as a water lily, in recognition of her numerous friends and admirers.

“‘*What a sacrifice,*’ the latter muttered, between

their set teeth! 'What a sacrifice,' my heart echoed back!

"Mr. Jefferson Jones was an ossified old bachelor. He had but one idea in his head, and that was, how to make money. There was only one thing he understood equally well, and that was, how to keep it. He was angular, prim, cold and precise; mean, grovelling, contemptible and cunning.

"And Edith! Our peerless Edith, whose lovers were 'legion;' Edith, with her passionate heart, her beauty, grace, taste and refinement; Edith to vow 'love and honor' to such a soulless block! It made me shudder to think of it! I felt as though his very gaze was profanation.

"Well, the wedding was over; and she was duly installed mistress of Jefferson House. She had five dresses, fine furniture, a fine equipage, and the stupidest possible encumbrance, in the shape of a husband.

"Mr. Jefferson Jones was very proud of his bride; firstly, because she added to his importance, secondly, because he plumed himself not a little in bearing off so a dainty a prize. It gave him a malicious pleasure to meet her old admirers, with the graceful Edith upon his arm. Of course she

preferred *him* to them all; else, why did she marry him?

"Then how deferential she was in her manner since their marriage; how very polite, and how careful to perform her duty to the letter. Mr. Jones decided, with his usual acumen, that there was no room for a doubt, on *that* point! He noticed, indeed, that her girlish gaiety was gone; but that was a decided improvement, according to his views. She was *Mrs. Jones*, now, and meant to keep all the whiskered popinjays at a respectful distance. *He liked it!*

"And so, through those interminable evenings, Edith sat, playing long, stupid games of chess with him, or listening (?) to his gains or losses in the way of trade; or reading political articles of which the words conveyed no ideas to her absent mind.

"She walked through the busy streets, leaning on his arm, with an *unseen form* ever at her side; and slept—(God forgive her!) next his heart, when *hers* was *far away!* But when she was *alone!* no human eye to read her sad secret! her small hands clasped in agony, and her fair head bent to the very dust,—*was he not avenged?*

"It was a driving storm; Mr. Jones concluded to dine at a restaurant instead of returning home.

He had just seated himself, and given his orders to the obsequious waiter, when his attention was attracted by the conversation of two gentleman near him.

“‘Have you seen la belle Edith, since her marriage, Harry?’

“‘No; I feel too much vexed with her. Such a splendid specimen of flesh and blood to marry such an idiot! all for a foolish quarrel with Ainslie. You never saw such a wreck as it has made of him. However, she is well punished; for, with all her consummate tact and effort to keep up appearances, it is very plain that she is the most miserable woman in existence, as Mr. Jefferson Jones, whom I have never seen, might perceive, if he wasn’t, as all the world says, the very prince of donkeys.’

Jones seized his hat, and rushed into the open air, tugging at his neck-tie as if he was choking. Six times he went, like a comet, round the square; then, setting his beaver down over his eyes, in a very prophetic manner, he turned his footsteps deliberately homeward. It was but the deceitful calm before the whirlwind!

“He found Edith, calm, pale, and self-possessed, as usual. He was quite as much so, himself; even went so far as to compliment her on a coquettish

little jacket that fitted her rounded figure very charmingly.

"'I'm thinking of taking a short journey, Edith,' said he, seating himself by her side, and playing with the silken cord and tassels about her waist. 'As it is wholly a business trip, it would hamper me to take you with me—but *you'll hear from me*. Meanwhile, you know how to amuse yourself; hey, Edith?'

"He looked searchingly in her face. There was no conscious blush, no change of expression, no tremor of the frame. He might as well have addressed a marble statue.

"Mr. Jefferson Jones was *posed*! Well, he bade her one of his characteristic adieus; and when the door closed, Edith felt as if a mountain weight had been lifted off her heart. There was but one course for her to pursue. She knew it; she had already marked it out. She would deny herself to all visitors; she would not go abroad till her husband's return. She was strong in her purpose; there should be no door left open for busy scandal to enter. Of Ainslie, she knew nothing, save that a letter reached her from him after her marriage, which she had returned unopened.

"And so she wandered restlessly through those splendid rooms, and tried, by this self-inflicted

penance, to atone for the defection of her heart. Did she take her guitar, old songs *they* had sang together came unbidden to her lip; that book, too, they had read. Oh, it was *all misery! turn where she would!*

"Day after day passed by—no letter from Mr. Jones! The time had already passed that was fixed upon for his return, and Edith, nervous from close confinement and the weary inward struggle, started like a frightened bird, at every footfall.

"It came at last, the letter, sealed with black! 'He had been accidentally drowned—his hat was found—all search for the body had been unavailing.'

"Edith was no hypocrite. She could not mourn for him, save in the outward garb of woe; but now that he was *dead*, conscience did its office. She had not, in the eye of the world, been untrue; but *there is an eye that searches deeper!* that scans *thoughts* as well as actions.

"Ainslie was just starting for the continent by order of a physician, when the news reached him. A brief time he gave to decorum, and then they met! It is needless to say what that meeting was. Days and months of wretchedness were forgotten like some dreadful dream. She was again his own Edith, sorrowing, repentant, and happy!

"They were sitting together, one evening; Edith's hand was upon his shoulder, and her face radiant as a seraph's. They were speaking of their future home.

"'Any spot on the wide earth but this, dear Ainslie. Take me away from these painful associations.'

"'Say you so; pretty Edith?' said a well-known voice. 'I but tried that faithful heart of yours to *prove it!* Pity to turn such a pretty comedy into a tragedy, but I happen to be *manager* here, young man,' said Mr. Jones, turning fiercely towards the horror-struck Ainslie!

"The revulsion was too dreadful. Edith survived but a week; Ainslie became hopelessly insane."

LVI.

A WIFE'S DEVOTION.

FANNY has very nice ideas on this subject. She says:—

“‘Every wife needs a good stock of love to start with.’

“*Don't* she! You are upon a sick bed! a little feeble thing lies upon your arm, that you might crush with one hand. You take those little velvet fingers in yours, close your eyes, and turn your head languidly to the pillow. Little brothers and sisters, Carry, and Harry, and Fanny, and Frank, and Willy, and Mary, and Kitty, (half a score) come tiptoeing into the room, ‘to see the new-baby.’ It is quite an old story to ‘nurse,’ who sits there like an automaton, while they give vent to their enthusiastic admiration of its wee toes and

fingers, and make *profound inquiries*, which nobody thinks best to hear! You look on with a languid smile, and they pass out, asking 'why they can't stay with dear mamma, and why they mustn't play puss in the corner,' as usual?

"You wonder if your little croupy boy tied his tippet on when he went to school, and whether Betty will see that your husband's flannel is aired, and if Peggy has cleaned the silver and washed off the front door-steps, and what your blessed husband is about, that he don't come home to dinner. There sits old nurse, keeping up that dreadful treadmill trotting, 'to quiet the baby,' till you could fly through the key-hole in desperation.

The odor of dinner begins to creep up stairs—you wonder if your husband's pudding will be made right, and if Betty will remember to put wine in the sauce, as he likes it; and then the perspiration starts out on your forehead, as you hear a thumping on the stairs, and a child's suppressed scream; and nurse swathes the baby up in flannel to the tip of its nose, dumps it down in the easy-chair, and tells you to 'leave the family to her, and go to sleep.' Bye-and-bye she comes in, after staying down long enough to get a refreshing cup of coffee—and walks up to the bed with a bowl of gruel, tasting it, and then *putting the spoon back*

into the bowl. In the first place you hate gruel—in the next, you couldn't eat it if she held a pistol to your head, after THAT SPOON has been in her mouth; so you meekly suggest that it be set on the table to cool, (hoping by some providential interposition, it *may get tipped over.*) Well, she creeps round your room with a pair of creaking shoes, and a bran new gingham gown, that rattles like a paper window-curtain, at every step; and smooths her hair with your nice little head-brush, and opens a drawer *by mistake* (?) 'thinking it was the baby's drawer.' Then you hear little nails scratching on the door; and Charley whispers through the key-hole—'Mamma, Charley's tired; *please* let Charley come in?' Nurse scowls, and says no; but you intercede (poor Charley, he's only a baby himself.) Well, he leans his little head wearily against the pillow, and looks suspiciously at that little bundle of flannel in nurse's lap. It's clear he's had a hard time of it, *what with tears and molasses!* The little shining curls that you have so often rolled over your fingers, are a tangled mass; and you long to take him, and make him comfortable, and *cosset* him a little; and then the baby cries again; and you turn your head to the pillow with a smothered sigh. Nurse hears it, and Charley is taken struggling from the room.

"You take your watch from under the pillow, to see if husband won't be home soon, and then look at nurse, who takes a pinch of snuff *over your bowl of gruel*, and sits down nodding drowsily, with the baby in alarming proximity to the fire. Now you hear a *dear* step on the stairs. It's *your Charley*! How bright he looks! and what nice fresh air he brings with him from out doors! He parts the bed-curtains, looks in, and pats you on the cheek. You just want to lay your head on his shoulder, and have such a *splendid cry*! but there sits that old Gorgon of a nurse—she don't believe in husbands, *she* don't! You make Charley a free mason sign to send her down stairs for something. He says, (*right out loud*—men are *so* stupid!) '*What did you say, dear?*' Of course you protest you didn't say a word—*never thought of such a thing*! and cuddle your head down to your ruffled pillows, and cry because you don't know what else to do, and because you are weak and weary, and full of care for your family, and don't want to see anybody but 'Charley.'

"Nurse says 'she shall have you sick,' and tells your husband 'he'd better go down, and let you go to sleep.' Off he goes, wondering what on earth ails you, *to cry*!—wishing *he* had *nothing to do* but lie still, and be waited upon! After dinner

he comes in to bid you good-bye before he goes to his office—whistles 'Nelly Bly' loud enough to wake up the baby, (whom he calls '*a comical little concern!*') and puts his dear thoughtless head down to your pillow, (at a signal from you,) to hear what you have to say. Well, there's no help for it, you cry again, and only say '*dear Charley,*' and he laughs, and settles his dickey, and says you are '*a nervous little puss,*' gives you a kiss, lights his cigar at the fire, half strangles the new baby with the first whiff, and *takes your heart off with him down street!*

"And you lie there and eat *that* gruel! and pick the *fuzz* all off the blanket, and make faces at the nurse, under the sheet, and wish Eve had never ate that apple (Genesis 3: 16;) or that you were *Abel*' to '*Cain*' her for doing it!"—

LVII.

MRS. ZEBEDEE SMITH'S PHILOSOPHY.

DEAR me! how *expensive it is to be poor*. Every time I go out, my best bib and tucker has to go on. If Zebedee was worth a cool million, I might wear a coal-hod on my head, if I chose, with perfect impunity. There was that old nabob's wife at lecture, the other night, in a dress that might have been made for Noah's great-grandmother. *She can afford it!* Now if it rains knives and forks, I must sport a ten dollar hat, a forty dollar dress, and a hundred dollar shawl. If I go to a concert, I must take the highest priced seat, and ride there and back, just to let 'Tom, Dick and Harry' see that I can afford it. Then we must hire the most expensive pew in the broad-aisle of a tip-top church, and give orders to the sexton not

to admit any strangers into it who look snobbish. Then my little children, Napoleon Bonaparte and Dona Maria Smith, can't go to a public school, *because, you know, we shouldn't have to pay anything.*

"Then if I go shopping, to buy a paper of needles, I have to get a little chap to bring them home, because it wouldn't answer for me to be seen carrying a bundle through the streets. We have to keep three servants where one might do; and Zebedee's coats have to be sent to the tailor when they need a button sewed on, *for the look of the thing.*

"Then if I go to the sea-shore, in summer, I can't take my comfort, as rich people do, in gingham dresses, loose shoes, and cambric sun-bonnets. My senses! no! I have to be screwed up by ten o'clock in a Swiss muslin dress, a French cap, and the contents of an entire jeweller's shop showered over my person; and my Napoleon Bonaparte and Dona Maria can't go off the piazza, because the big rocks and little pebbles cut their toes so badly through their patent kid slippers.

"Then if Zebedee goes a-fishing, he wouldn't dare to put on a linen coat for the price of his reputation. No indeed! Why, he never goes to

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the barn-yard without drawing on his white kids. Then he orders the most ruinous wines at dinner, and fees those white jackets, till his purse is as empty as an egg-shell. I declare it is *abominably* expensive. I don't believe *rich people* have the least idea how much it costs *poor people* to live!

LVIII.

INTERESTING TO BASHFUL MEN.

“ ‘Faint heart ne’er won fair lady.’

DIDN'T *it though!* I FAN-cy *it does!* If there's anything in the world that is *quite entirely* interesting, it's a man who daresn't say 'I love you,' though *his* eyes told the story long ago! Of course you don't *know* anything about it. Oh, no! Can't, for the soul of you, tell why he never comes near you without a tremor, or what possesses him to say 'yes,' instead of 'no,' or to kiss your little brother so often, and give him so much sugar-candy! Have no idea *why* he looks so '*distract*' and embarrassed, when you take another gentleman's arm or smile at him. Never see that bright magnetic sparkle in his eye when you call him *Harry*, instead of *Mr. Fay*. Don't see him pick up a rosebud that you dropped from your girdle, and

hide it in his vest! (*don't like it, either!*) You don't notice what a *long job* he makes of it, putting your shawl on. You haven't the slightest suspicion *where* the *mate* of your little kid glove went, the last time you went to walk; you are *not at all magnetically affected yourself!* Oh, no, *not a bit of it!* Just as cool as a fur—*refrigerator!*

"Don't feel a bit *nervous* when your mother gets up and leaves the room! Always have a topic at your tongue's end to dash off on. Never pick your ribbons all to pieces because you daresn't look him in the face. Never *refuse* to go to ride with him, when you are just *dying* to go. Never blush as red as a pulpit cushion, when your brother teases you about him, or say 'you don't care a fig for him.' When HIS ring at the door sends your heart to your mouth, you never snatch up a book and get so *entirely* absorbed in it, that he is obliged to touch your arm, before you can find out that he's in your presence! *You never read his notes, when you could say them all off with your eyes shut!* You never *hide them* where anybody can find them—without you should be taken with a fainting fit! You take precious good care to keep *all that* from Mr. Fay!

"All right, dear; don't hold out a *single straw* to help him ashore! Make him come *every step* of the

way without a guide-board! but when he GETS THERE—hem!—if you own a soul—tell him so!

“ ‘Faint heart never won fair lady,’ hey! I differ! If there’s anything that’s a regular shower-bath to love, it’s your ‘veni, vidi, vici’ man, who considers himself so *excruciatingly* omnipotent! Softly, sir! *Forewarned, forearmed!* You rouse all the antagonism in our nature! The more you are sure you’ll win, the *more* you won’t! You’ve to earn your laurels,—to win your battle; (if you ever noticed it!)

“Do you suppose we are going to lose all those interesting, half-broken sentences, and all those pretty little blunders you make when we come near you? If you only *knew* how interesting it was for us to see the color rush to your forehead, at such times, or to see you look so ‘triste’ when some old maid comes in to spend the evening, and you have to leave your little Paradise to go *creeping* home with her! or to see you manœuvre one whole evening with a diplomacy (deserving a reward) for a seat next to us! Goodness gracious! I tell you ‘faint hearts’ *never win anything else* but ‘fair ladies!’”

LIX.

THE ANGEL CHILD.

LITTLE Mabel had no mother. She was slight, and sweet, and fragile, like her type, the lily of the valley. Her little hand, as you took it in yours, seemed almost to melt in your clasp. She had large, dark eyes, whose depths, with all your searching, you might fail to fathom. Her cheek was very pale, save when some powerful emotion lent it a passing flush; her fair, open brow might have defied an angel's scrutiny; her little footfall was noiseless as a falling snow-flake; and her voice was sweet and low as the last note of the bird ere it folds its head under its wing for its nightly slumber.

"The house in which Mabel lived, was large and splendid. You would have hesitated to crush with your foot the bright flowers on the thick, rich

carpet. The rare old pictures on the walls were marred by no envious cross-lights; light and shade were artistically disposed. Beautiful statues, which the sculptor (dream-inspired) had risen from a feverish couch to finish, lay bathed in the rosy light that streamed through the silken curtains. Obsequious servants glided in and out, as if taught by instinct to divine the unspoken wants of their mistress.

"I said the little Mabel had no mother; and yet there was a lady, fair and bright, of whose beautiful lip, and large dark eyes, and graceful limbs, little Mabel's were the mimic counterpart. Poets, artists, and sculptors, had sung, and sketched, and modelled her charms. Nature had been most prodigal of adornment—there was only one little thing she had forgotten—the Lady Mabel had no soul.

"She did not forget to deck little Mabel's limbs with costliest fabrics of most unique fashioning; not that every shining ringlet on that graceful little head was not arranged by Mademoiselle Jennet, in strict obedience to orders; not that a large nursery was not fitted up luxuriously at the top of the house, filled with toys which its little owner never cared to look at; not that the Lady Mabel's silken robe did not sweep, once a week,

with a queenly grace through the apartment, to see if the mimic wardrobe provided for its little mistress fitted becomingly, or needed replenishing, or was kept in order by the smart French maid. Still, as I said before, *the little Mabel had no mother!*

"See her, as she stands there by the nursery window, crushing her bright ringlets in the palm of her tiny hand. Her large eyes glow, her cheek flushes, then pales; now the little breast heaves! for the gorgeous west is one sea of molten gold. Each bright tint thrills her with strange rapture. She almost holds her breath, as they deepen, then, fade and die away; and now the last bright beam disappears behind the hills; and the soft, grey twilight comes creeping on. Amid its deepening shadows, *one bright star* springs suddenly to its place in the heavens! Little Mabel cannot tell why the warm tears are coursing down her sweet face, or why her limbs tremble, and her heart beats so fast, or why she dreads lest the shrill voice of Mademoiselle Jennet should break the spell. She longs to soar, like a bird, or a bright angel. She had a nurse once who told her 'there was a God.' She wants to know if *He* holds that bright star in its place. She wants to know if Heaven is a long way off, and if *she* shall ever be

a bright angel; and she would like to say a little prayer, her heart is so full, if she only *knew* how; but poor, sweet little Mabel—*she has no mother.*"

LX.

UNCLE BEN'S ATTACK OF SPRING- FEVER.

THISN'T possible you have been insane enough to go to housekeeping in the country for the summer? Oh, you ought to hear my experience,' and Uncle Ben wiped the perspiration from his forehead at the very thought.

"Yes, I tried it once, with city habits and a city wife; got rabid with the dog-days, and nothing could cure me but a nibble of green grass. There was Susan, you know, who never was off a brick pavement in her life, and didn't know the difference between a cheese and a grindstone.

"Well, we ripped up our carpets, and tore down our curtains, and packed up our crockery, and nailed down our pictures, and eat dust for a week, and then we emigrated to Daisy Ville.

"Could I throw up a window or fasten back a blind in that house, without sacrificing my suspenders and waistband button? No, sir! Weren't the walls full of Red Rovers? Didn't the doors fly open at every wind gust? Didn't the roof leak like the mischief? Wasn't the chimney leased to a pack of swallows? Wasn't the well a half a mile from the house?

"Oh, you needn't laugh. Instead of the comfortable naps to which I had been accustomed, I had to sleep with one eye open all night, lest I shouldn't get into the city in time. I had to be shaving in the morning before a rooster in the barn-yard had stirred a feather; swallowed my coffee and toast by steam, and then, still masticating, made for the front door. There stood Peter with my horse and gig (for I detest your cars and omnibusses.) On the floor of the chaise was a huge basket to bring home material for the next day's dinner; on the seat was a dress of my wife's, to be left 'without fail' at Miss Sewing Silk's, to have the forty-eleventh hook moved one-sixth of a degree higher up on the back. Then there was a package of shawls from Tom Fools & Co., to be returned; and a pair of shoes to carry to Lapstone, who was to select another pair for me to bring out at night; and a demijohn to be filled

with Sherry, &c. Well, I whipped up Bucephalus, left my sleeping wife and babies, and started for town, cogitating over an intricate business snarl which bid defiance to any straightening process. I hadn't gone half a mile before an old maid (I hate old maids) stopped me to know if I was going into town, and if I was, if I wouldn't take her in, as the omnibusses made her sick. She said she was 'niece to Squire Dandelion, and had a few chores to do a-shopping.' So I took her in, or rather she took *me* in (but she didn't do it but once—for I bought a sulkey next day)! Well, it came night, and I was hungry as a Hottentot, for I never could dine as your married widowers *pro tem.* do, at eating-houses, where one gravy answers for flesh, fish, and fowl, and the pudding-sauce is as black as the cook's complexion. So I went round on an empty stomach, hunting up *my express-man parcels*, and wending my way to the stable with arms and pockets running over. When I got home, found my wife in despair; no tacks in the house to nail down carpets, and not one to be had at the store in the village; the cook had deserted, because she couldn't do without 'her *city privileges*,' (meaning Jonathan Jones, the 'dry dirt' man;) and the chambermaid, a buxom country girl, with fire red hair and temper to match, was spinning round the crockery

(a la Blitz) because she 'couldn't eat with the family.'

"Then Charley was taken with the croup in the night, and in my fright I put my feet into my coat sleeves, and my arms into my pants, and put on one of my wife's ruffles instead of a dickey, and rode three miles in a pelting rain, for some 'goose-grease' for his throat.

"Then we never found out till cherries, and strawberries, and peaches were ripe, how many *friends* (?) we had. There was a horse hitched at every rail in the fence, so long as there was anything left to eat on a tree in the farm; but if my wife went in town shopping, and called on any of them, they were 'out, or engaged;'—or if at home, had 'just done dinner, and were going to ride.'

"Then there was no school in the neighborhood for the children, and they were out in the barn-yard feeding the pigs with lump-sugar, and chasing the hens off the nest, to see what was the prospect for eggs, and making little boats of their shoes and sailing them in the pond, and milking the cow in the middle of the day, &c.

"Then if I dressed in the morning in linen coat, thin pants, and straw hat, I'd be sure to find the wind 'dead east' when I got into the city; or if I put on broadcloth and fixins to match, it

would be hotter than Shadrach's furnace, all day—while the dense morning fog would extract the starch from my dickey and shirt-bosom, till they looked very like a collapsed flapjack.

"Then our meeting-house was a good two miles distant, and we had to walk, or stay at home; because my factotum (Peter) wouldn't stay on the farm without he could have the horse Sundays to go to Mill Village to see his affianced Nancy. Then the old farmers leaned on my stone wall, and laughed till the tears came into their eyes, to see 'the city gentleman's' experiments in horticulture, as they passed by 'to meetin'.'

"Well, sir, before summer was over, my wife and I looked as jaded as omnibus horses—she with chance 'help' and floods of city company, and I with my arduous duties as *express man* for my own family in particular, and the neighbors in general.

"And now here we are—'No 9 Kossuth-square.' Can reach anything we want, by putting our hands out the front windows. If, as the poet says, '*man made the town,*' all I've got to say is—he understood his business!"

LXI.

CONNUBIAL ADVERTISEMENT.

ON this subject Fanny writes eloquently, as will be seen by the following sketch. She writes as if she had learned all about it, in the bitter school of experience.

“CONNUBIAL.—Mr. Albert Wicks, of Coventry, under date of December 28th, advertised his wife as having left his bed and board; and now, under date of March 26th, he appends to his former notice, the following:

‘Mrs. Wicks, if you ever intend to come back and live with me any more you must come back now or not at all.

‘I love you as I do my life, and if you will come now, I will forgive you for all you have done and threatened to do, which I can prove by three good witnesses; and if not, I shall attend to your case without delay, and soon, too.’

“There, now, Mrs. Wicks, what is to be done? ‘Three good witnesses,’ think of *that*! What the mischief have you been about? Whatever it is

Mr. Wicks is ready to 'love you like his life.'
Consistent Mr. Wicks!

"Now take a little advice, my dear innocent, and don't allow yourself to be badgered or frightened into anything. None but a coward ever threatens a woman. Put *that* in your memorandum book. It's all bluster and braggadocio. Thread your darning-needle, and tell him you are ready for him—ready for anything except his 'loving you like his life;' that you could not possibly survive that infliction, without having your 'wick' snuffed entirely out.

"Sew away, just as if there was not a domestic earthquake brewing under your connubial feet. If it sends you up in the air, it sends him too—there's a pair of you! Put *that* in his Wick—ed ear! Of course he will sputter away, as if he had swallowed a 'Roman candle,' and you can take a nap till he gets through, and then offer him your smelling-bottle to quiet his nerves.

"That's the way to quench him!"

LXII.

WHAT FANNY THINKS ABOUT SEWING MACHINES.

THERE'S 'nothing new under the sun;'— so I've read, somewhere; either in Ecclesiastes or Uncle Tom's Cabin; but at any rate, I was forcibly reminded of the profound wisdom of the remark, upon seeing a great flourish of trumpets in the papers about a 'Sewing Machine,' that had been *latehly invented*.

"Now if *I* know anything of history, that discovery dates back as far as the Garden of Eden. If *Mrs. Adam* wasn't the first sewing machine, *I'll give up guessing*. Didn't she go right to work making aprons, before she had done receiving her bridal calls from the beasts and beastesses? Certainly she did, and I honor her for it, too.

"Well—do you suppose all her pretty little de-

scendants who ply their 'busy fingers' in the upper lofts of tailors, and hatters, and vest-makers, and 'finding' establishments, are going to be superseded by that dumb old thing? Do you suppose their young and enterprising patrons prefer the creaking of a crazy machine to the music of their young voices? Not by a great deal!

"It's something, I can tell you, for them to see their pretty faces light up, when they pay off their wages of a Saturday night (small fee enough! too often, God knows!) Pity that the *shilling heart* so often accompanies the *guinea means*.

"Oh, launch out, gentlemen! Don't *always* look at things with a *business* eye. Those fragile forms are young, to toil so unremittingly. God made no distinction of *sex* when he said—'The laborer is worthy of his hire.' Man's cupidity puts that interpretation upon it.

"Those young operatives in your employ, pass, in their daily walks, forms youthful as their own, 'clothed in purple and fine linen,' who '*toil not, neither do they spin.*' Oh, teach them not to look after their 'satin and sheen,' purchased at such a fearful cost, with a discouraged sigh!

"For one, I can never pass such a 'fallen angel' with a 'stand aside' feeling. A neglected youth, an early orphanage, poverty, beauty, coarse fare,

the weary day of toil lengthened into night,—a mere pittance its reward. Youth, health, young blood, and the practised wile of the ready tempter! *Oh, where's the marvel?*

"*Think of all this*, when you poise that hardly earned dollar, on your business finger. What if it were your own delicate sister? Let a LITTLE heart creep into that shrewd bargain. 'Twill be an investment in the Bank of Heaven, that shall return to you four-fold."

LXIII.

THE TIME TO CHOOSE.

MRS. CHRISSHOLM says:—"The best time to choose a wife is early in the morning. If a young lady is at all inclined to sulks and slatternness, it is just before breakfast. As a general thing, a woman don't get on her temper, till after 10 A. M."

Very spiritedly Fanny makes answer:—

" ' *Men* never look slovenly before breakfast—
no indeed! Never run round vestless in their
stocking-feet, with dressing-gown inside out; soiled
handkerchief hanging by one corner out of the
pocket; minus dickey; minus neck-tie; pantaloons
straps flying at their heels; suspenders streaming
from their waistband; chin shaved on one side,

lathered on the other; last night's coat and pants on the floor, just where they hopped out of them; face snarled up in forty wrinkles, because the chamber fire won't burn; and because it snows; and because the office-boy hasn't been for the keys; and because the newspaper hasn't come; and because they smoked too many cigars *by one dozen*, the night before; and because they lost *that* bet, and can't pay the *Scot-t*; and because there's an omelet instead of a chicken-leg for breakfast; and because they are out of sorts and shaving-soap; and out of cigars and credit; and can't *any how* 'get their temper on,' till they get some money and a mint julap!

"Any time 'before 10 o'clock,' is the time to 'choose' a husband—*perhaps!*"

LXIV.

OUR NELLY.

THIS is one of Fanny's sweet bits of pathos ; so sweet, so pure, it would furnish an apology for half a volume of coarse slang :—

“ ‘ Who is she ? ’ ‘ Why, that is our Nelly, to be sure. ’ Nobody ever passed Nelly without asking, ‘ Who is she ? ’ One can't forget the glance of that blue eye, in a hurry ; nor the waving of those golden locks ; nor the breezy grace of that lithe figure ; nor those scarlet lips, nor the bright, glad sparkle of the whole face ; and then she is not a bit proud ; although she steps so like a queen she would shake hands just as quick with a horny palm as with a kid glove. The world can't spoil ‘ our Nelly, ’ for her heart is in the right place.

“ ‘ You should have seen her thank an old farmer, the other day, for clearing the road, that she might pass. He shaded his eyes with his

hand, when she swept by, as if he had been dazzled by a sudden flash of sunlight, and muttered to himself, as he looked after her—'Won't she make somebody's heart ache?' Well, she has, but it is because from among all her lovers she could marry but one, and, God save us! that her choice should have fallen upon Walter Lee! If he don't quench out the love-light in those blue eyes, my name is not John Morrison. I've seen his eyes flash when things didn't suit him; I've seen him nurse his wrath to keep it warm till the smouldering embers were ready for conflagration. He's as vindictive as an Indian. I'd as soon mate a dove with a tiger, as give him 'our Nelly.' There's a dozen noble fellows, this hour, ready to lay down their lives for her, and yet out of the whole crowd she must choose Walter Lee. Oh, I have no patience to think of it. Well-a-day! mark my words, he will break her heart before a twelve-month! He's a pocket edition of Napoleon.'

"A year had passed by, and amid the hurry of business and the din of the great city, I had quite forgotten Glenburn and its fairy queen. It was a time to recall her to mind, that lovely June morning—with its soft fleecy clouds, its glad sunlight, its song of birds, and its breath of roses; and so I

threw the reins on Romeo's neck, that he might choose his own pace down the sweet-briar path, to John Morrison's cottage. And there sat John, in the doorway, smoking his pipe, with Towser crouched at his feet, in the same old spot, just as if the sun had never gone down behind the hills since I parted with him.

"'And 'our Nelly,' said I, taking up the thread of his year old narrative as though it had never been broken—'and 'our Nelly?'

"'Under the sod,' said the old man, with a dark frown; 'under the sod. He broke her heart, just as I told you he would. Such a bridal as it was! I'd as lief have gone to a funeral. And then Walter carried her off to the city, where she was as much out of her element as a humming-bird in a meeting-house; and tried to make a fine lady of her, with stiff, city airs, and stiff city manners. It was like trying to fetter the soft west wind, which comes and goes at its own sweet will; and Nelly—who was only another name for *Nature*—pined and drooped like a bird in a darkened cage.

"'One by one her old friends dropped off, wearied with repeated and rude repulses from her moody husband, till he was left, as he desired, master of the field. It was astonishing the ascendancy he gained over his sweet wife, contemptible

as he was. She made no objection to his most absurd requirements; but her step lost its spring, her eye its sparkle; and one might listen long for her merry-ringing laugh. Slowly, sadly, to Nelly came that terrible conviction from which a wife has no appeal. Ah! there is no law to protect woman from negative abuse! no mention made in the statute book (which *men frame for themselves*) of the constant dropping of daily discomforts which wear the loving heart away. No allusion to looks or words that are like poisoned arrows to the sinking spirit. No! if she can show no mark of brutal fingers on her delicate flesh—he has fulfilled his legal promise to the letter—to love, honor, and cherish her. Out on such a mockery of justice!

“Well, sir; Nelly fluttered back to Glenburn, with the broken wing of hope, to die! So wasted! so lovely! The lips that blessed *her*, could not choose but to curse *him*. ‘She leaned on a broken reed,’ said her old gray-haired father, as he closed her blue eyes forever. ‘May God forgive him, for I never can,’ said an old lover, whose heart was buried in her grave.

“‘NELLY LEE, *aged 18.*’

“‘You’ll read it in the village churchyard, sir; eighteen! Brief years, sir, to drain all of happiness Life’s cup could offer!’”

LXV.

I CAN'T.

THIS is a phrase which is "teetotally" banished from Fanny's "Fern dictionary." Read the following exordium, and you'll never think of doubting her assertion, that she is "a little Bunker-Hill" herself—a genuine Napoleon in petticoats.

"Apollo! what a face! doleful as a hearse; folded hands; hollow chest; whining voice; the very picture of cowardly irresolution. Spring to your feet, hold up your head, set your teeth together, draw that fine form of yours up to the height that God made it; draw an immense long breath, and look about you. What do you see? Why, all creation taking care of number one—pushing ahead like the car of Juggernaut, over live victims. There it is; and you can't help it. Are you going to lie down and be crushed?"

"By all that's holy, no! dash ahead! You've as good a right to mount the triumphal car as your neighbor. Snap your fingers at croakers; if you can't get *round* a stump, leap over it, high and dry! Have nerves of steel, a will of iron; never mind sideaches, or heartaches, or headaches; dig away without stopping to breathe, or to notice envy or malice. Set your target in the clouds and aim at it. If your arrow falls short of the mark, what of that? Pick it up and go at it again. If you should *never* reach it, you'll shoot higher than as if you only aimed at a bush. Don't whine, if your friends fall off. At the first stroke of good luck, by Mammon! they'll swarm around you like a hive of bees, till you are disgusted with human nature.

"*'I can't!'* Oh, pshaw! I throw my glove in your face, if I *am* a woman! You are a disgrace to corduroys. What! a *man* lack courage! A *man* want independence! A *man* to be discouraged at obstacles! A man afraid to face anything on earth save his Maker! Why! *I'm a little 'Bunker Hill,' myself!* I've the most unmitigated contempt for you! you little *pusillanimous* pussy cat! There's nothing manly about you, except your whiskers."

LXVI.

MRS. SMITH'S REVERIE, WRITTEN
OUT BY FANNY FERN.

“ ‘All dissimulation is disloyalty to love.’

I'VE *thought* so before,' said Mrs. Smith ; 'but now I *know* it, *because I read it in the newspapers*. These editors beat the D—utch for understanding human nature, (all except female nature;) *there* they are decidedly benighted. However, it isn't for my interest to throw any light on *that* subject ; it is an interesting study that I shan't interfere with. But this is a digression. As I was saying, 'dissimulation is disloyalty to love.' Didn't Mr. Smith tell me, when he asked me, on his knees, to make him the happiest of men, that I was the only daughter of Eve he ever fancied ; and didn't I, before the honey-moon was over, find in his old bachelor trunk, locks of hair

of every color the sun ever shone upon? And doesn't it do me good to put my matrimonial foot on the cricket that I stuffed with them? Certainly—I only wish I had their entire scalps!

“Well—didn't he come home one Sunday, with a face as long as an orthodox steeple, and give me 'the text and heads of the discourse,' when he had been off rolling ninepins all the morning? And didn't I always know, when he kissed me, or gave me a twenty dollar bill, (which was much more acceptable!) that it was the premonitory symptom of a desperate flirtation with somebody? and wasn't I sure, when that buff vest, and blue coat with bright brass buttons, went on, that there was immense execution to be done somewhere on forbidden ground?

“Well—'Life is short;' so is Mr. Smith. No help for either, that I know of! I'm too busy, amusing myself, to attend to his little derelictions. If there's anything that I ignore it is curiosity. It is so decidedly a *masculine failing* that I scorn to be guilty of it!”

LXVII.

A NIGHT-WATCH WITH A DEAD INFANT.

MOOREST thou thy bark so soon, little voyager?
Through those infant eyes, with a prophet's
vision, sawest thou life's great battle-field, swarm-
ing with fierce combatants? Fell upon thy timid
ear the far-off din of its angry strife? Drooped
thy head wearily on the bosom of the Sinless,
fearful of earthly taint? Fluttered thy wings
impatiently 'gainst the bars of thy prison-house,
sweet bird of Paradise?

"God speed thy flight! No unerring sportsman
shall have power to ruffle thy spread pinions,
or maim thy soaring wing. No sheltering nest
had earth for thee, where the chill wind of sorrow
might not blow! No garden of Eden, where the
serpent lay not coiled beneath the flowers! No

'Tree of Life,' whose branches might have sheltered thee for aye!

"Warm fall the sunlight on thy grassy pillow, sweet human blossom! Softly fall the night dews on the blue-eyed violet above thee! Side by side with thee are hearts that have long since ceased hoping or aching. There lies the betrothed maiden, in her unappropriated loveliness; the bride, with her head pillowed on golden tresses, whose rare beauty, even the Great Spoiler seemed loth to touch; childhood, but yesterday warm and rosy on its mother's breast; the loving wife and mother, in life's sweet prime; the gray-haired pastor, gone to his reward; the youth of crisped locks and brow unfurrowed by care; the heart-broken widow, and tearful orphan, all await with folded hands, closed eyes, and silent lips, alike with thee, the resurrection morn.

LXVIII.

A LITTLE GOOD ADVICE.—FROM FANNY FERN.

“‘No person should be delicate about asking for what is properly his due. If he neglects doing so, he is deficient in that spirit of independence which he should observe in all his actions. Rights are rights, and, if not granted, should be demanded.’

A *LITTLE* ‘Bunker Hill’ atmosphere about that! It suits my republicanism; but I hope no female sister will be such a novice as to suppose it refers to any but *masculine* rights. In the first place, my dear woman, ‘female rights’ is debateable ground; what you may call a ‘vexed question.’ In the next place, (just put your ear down, a *little* nearer) granted we *had* ‘rights,’ the more we ‘demand’ ’em, the *more we shan’t get ’em*. I’ve been converted to that faith this some time.

No sort of use to waste lungs and leather trotting to SIGH-racuse about it. The instant the subject is mentioned, the lords of creation are up and dressed. Guns and bayonets the order of the day; *no surrender* on every flag that floats! The only way left is to pursue the 'Uriah Heep' policy; look *umble*, and be almighty cunning. Bait 'em with submission, and then throw the noose over the will. Appear not to have any choice, and as true as gospel you'll get it. Ask *their* advice, and they'll be sure to follow *yours*. Look *one* way, and *pull another*! Make your reins of silk, *keep 'em out of sight, and drive where you like!*"

LXIX.

THE OTHER ONE.

SOMEBODY rather ambiguously remarks:—
“Let cynics prattle as they may, our existence here, without the presence of the other sex, would be only a dark and cheerless void.”

Fanny inquires, in reply:—“*Which* ‘other sex?’ Don’t be so obscure. Dr. Beecher says, ‘that a writer’s ideas should stand out like rabbit’s ears, so that the reader can get hold of them.’ If you alluded to the female sex, I don’t subscribe to it. I wish they were all ‘translated.’ If there is anything gives me the sensations of a landsman on his first sea voyage, it is the sight of a bonnet. Think of female friendship! Two women joining the Mutual Admiration Society; emptying their budget of love affairs; comparing bait to entrap victims;

sighing over the same rose leaf; sonnetizing the same moonbeam; patronizing the same milliner, and *exchanging female kisses!* (Betty, hand me my fan!)

“Well, let either have one bonnet or one lover more than the other—or, if they are blue stockings, let either be one round the higher on Fame’s ladder—bodkins and darning-needles! what a tempest! Caps and characters in such a case are of no account at all. Oh, there never should be but one woman alive at a time. Then the fighting would be all where it belongs—in the masculine camp. What a time there’d be, though! Wouldn’t she be a belle? Bless her little soul; how she would queen it. It makes me clap my hands to think of it. *The only woman in the world!* If it was me, shouldn’t they all leave off smoking, and wearing those odious plaid continuations? Should they ever wear an outside coat, with the flaps cut off, or a Kossuth hat, or a yellow Marseilles vest? or a mammoth bow on their neck-ties; or a turn-over dickey; or a watch-chain; or a ring on the little finger; or any other abomination or off-shoot of dandyism whatsoever? Shouldn’t I politely request them all to touch their hats, instead of jerking their heads, when they bowed? Wouldn’t I coax them to read me poetry till they had the

• bronchitis? Wouldn't they play on the flute, and sing the soul out of me? And then if they were sick, wouldn't I pet them, and tell them all sorts of comicalities, and make time fly like the mischief? Shouldn't wonder!"

LXX.

A PEN AND INK SKETCH.—BY FANNY
FERN.

DO you suppose Diogenes Dinkey would know his own portrait, if I drew it? It won't hurt me if he does, so long as it is a disputed point 'whether *I be I*.' Well, his proportions were decidedly alderman-ic, and his gait strongly resembled that of the wooden horses one sees jerked across the stage at the theat—I mean the museum! Such a stiff dickey as he wore! What prevented his ears from being sawed off by it, was beyond me.

"Diogenes was a saint and an epicure; divided his affections equally between veal pies and vestry meetings; in fact the former depended on his proper observance of the latter, as he was supported by sixpenny contributions from humbugged brethren

who considered him a celestial luminary. Of course he made his appearance simultaneously with the sexton, and kept popping up and down, in service time, like one of those corn-stalk witches, that country children play with. There was no 'napkin' big enough to hide his 'talent;' he endorsed everything the minister said; not mentioning what the deacons got off, and after that he put the audience to sleep by chasing round some idea of his own, till he lost it; and then he sat down. You didn't catch him raising any vexed questions about 'dipping,' or 'sprinkling,' or 'high church,' or 'low church,' not he! he had a real millennial disposition; never raised any theological fences he couldn't crawl under, or climb over, to pick up windfall sixpences to swell his salary for the benefit of his fellow-creatures in general and *himself in particular*. He didn't care a torn hymn-book, whether it was a Baptist, or Episcopalian, or Unitarian hand he shook, as long as it left a bonus in his saintly palm.

"Poor Diogenes! he was affected with spasmodic near-sightedness, that always attacked him when he saw a Paul Pry in the distance who might hold him by the button long enough to desire statistics of the amount of good he had performed. He liked to be inquisitorial himself; but, like most

persons of that description, he was not particular to have the compliment returned. He had a voluminous robe of dignity he threw on, at times, when escape was impossible, that was very excruciating to anybody who knew what was underneath it.

"Long life to you, Diogenes! I wouldn't lose you for a bright sixpence.

"I've attended many a conventicle where you were the chief attraction; you are a perfect study to
FANNY FERN."

LXXI.

FANNY'S "RULES FOR LADIES."

NEVER walk on the Common; it is 'vulgar;' dusty streets and a chorus of rattling omnibusses are more refined. Never go out in damp, cloudy or rainy weather. India rubbers and umbrellas are only fit for common people. Should it storm six weeks on a stretch, better ruin your health, than appear in anything but paper soles and silk dresses. When the chill autumn winds blow, go out in drapery sleeves, that the wind may have a free pass round your elbows. Don't disarrange your curls by bowing to an elderly person; nor by any manner of means recognize a male or female who is not a walking advertisement for a tailor or a milliner.

"Always whisper and laugh at concerts, by way of compliment to the performers, and to show your neighbors a sovereign contempt for their comfort. When Betty is brushing your hair, or lacing your boots, listen with avidity to all the gossip she can muster; it will encourage her laudable desire to take notes of *your* establishment for the benefit of her next mistress. Always keep *callers* waiting, till they have had time to notice the outlay of money in your parlors. It isn't a bad plan to send a *child* into the room to act as 'special reporter!' Always take physic on *Sunday*, and have a novel handy; or, you can write or read love-letters. Never on any account go into your kitchen, or know the difference between the manufacture of an omelet or an apple-pie. Call into your nursery once a week to see if Tommy's hair has begun to curl. Keep Betty till one o'clock at night, sitting up for your return; and order her to get up at four o'clock in the morning. Keep as many flirtations on hand as you conveniently can, without getting into a snarl.

Be just as gracious in your manner to a practised *roué*, (provided he has the entrance into good society,) as you would to a man deserving a woman's respect. Dispute with your sempstress about a ninepence, and buy a thousand dollar

shawl. Present the bouquet your *last* admirer sent you, to the next one who looks into your 'starry eyes!' Dance all night, sleep all day, and waltz with anybody who is the 'ton.'"

LXXII.

THE LITTLE PAUPER.

THIS is one of Fanny's most life-like word-paintings.

"It is only a little pauper! Never mind her. You see she knows her place, and keeps close to the wall, as if she expected an oath or a blow. The cold winds are making merry with those thin rags. You see nothing of childhood's rounded symmetry in those shrunken limbs and pinched features. Push her one side, *she's used to it*; she won't complain; she can't remember that she ever heard a kind word in her life. She'd think you were mocking if you tried it.

"She passes into the warm kitchen, savory with odorous dainties, and is ordered out with a threat by the portly cook. In the shop windows she

sees nice fresh loaves of bread and tempting little cakes. Rosy little children pass her, on their way to school, well-fed, well-clad and joyous, with a mother's parting kiss yet warm on their sweet lips.

"There seems to be happiness enough in the world, but it never comes to *her*. Her little basket is quite empty; and now, faint with hunger, she leans wearily against that shop window. There is a lovely lady, who has just passed in. She is buying cakes and *bon-bons* for her little girl as if she had the purse of Fortunatus. How nice it must be to be warm, and have enough to eat! Poor Meta! She has tasted nothing since she was sent forth with a curse in the morning, to beg or—steal, and the tears *will* come; there is happiness and plenty in the world—but *none for Meta!*

"Not so fast, little one! Warm hearts beat sometimes under silk and velvet. That lady has caught sight of your little woe-begone face and shivering form. Oh! what if it were *her* child?—and, obeying a sweet maternal impulse, she passes out the door, takes those little benumbed fingers in her daintily gloved hands, and leads the child, wondering, shy and bewildered, into fairy land.

"A delightful and novel sensation of warmth creeps over those frozen limbs—a faint color tinges

the pale cheeks, and the eyes grow liquid and lovely, as Meta raises them thankfully to her benefactress. The lady's little girl looks on with an innocent joy, and learns, for the first time, how 'blessed are the merciful.'

"And then Meta passes out, with a *heavy basket* and a *light heart*. Surely the street has grown wider and the sky brighter! This can scarcely be the same world! Meta's form is erect *now*! her step light as a child's should be. The sunshine of *human love* has brightened her pathway! Ah, Meta! earth is not all darkness—bright angels yet walk the earth. Sweet-voiced Pity and heaven-eyed Charity *sometimes* stoop to bless. God's image is only marred, not destroyed. He who feeds the ravens, bends to listen. Look *upward*, little Meta!"

LXXIII.

WHAT FANNY THINKS ABOUT FRIENDSHIP.

AND so you have 'the blues' hey? Well, I pity you! No I don't either; there's no *need* of it. If *one* friend proves a Judas, never mind! plenty of *warm, generous, nice* hearts left for the winning! If you are poor and have to sell your *free-agency* for a sixpence a week to some penurious relative, or be everlastingly thankful for the gift of an old garment that won't hang together till you get it home! just go to work like ten thousand evil spirits, and make yourself *independent!* and see with what a different pair of spectacles you'll get looked at! Nothing like it, my dear; you can have everything on earth you want, when you don't *need* anything. Don't the Bible say, 'to him that *hath* shall be given?' no mistake,

you see! When the wheel turns round with you on the top, saints and angels! you can do anything you like, play any sort of a prank, pout or smile, be grave or gay, saucy or courteous, it will pass muster! you never need trouble yourself—can't do anything *wrong* if you try! At the most it will only be an '*eccentricity*!' But you never need be such a fool as to expect that anybody will find out you're a *diamond* till you get a *showy setting*! you'll get knocked and cuffed round, and roughly handled, with paste and tinsel, and rubbish, till that auspicious moment arrives. *Then!* won't all the *sheaves bow down to your sheaf?*—not one rebellious straggler left in the field! But stay a little. In your adversity found you one faithful heart that stood firmly by your side and shared your tears; when skies were dark, and your pathway thorny and steep, 'and summer friends fell off like autumn leaves?' By all that's noble in a woman's heart, give that one the first place in it now. Let the world see *one* heart proof against the sunshine of prosperity. You can't *repay* such a friend—all the mines of Golconda couldn't do it! But in a thousand delicate ways, prompted by a woman's unerring tact, let your heart come forth, gratefully, generously, lovingly. Pray heaven he be on the shady side of fortune—that your heart

and hand may have a wider field for gratitude to show itself. Extract every thorn from his pathway, chase away every cloud of sorrow, brighten his lonely hours, smooth the pillow of sickness, and press lovingly his hand in death."

LXXIV.

✓ TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION.—
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO JEAL-
OUS HUSBANDS.—BY FANNY FERN.

PERCY, *dear* Percy, take back those bitter words; as heaven is my witness, they are undeserved by me. See, my eye quails not beneath yours; my cheek blanches not; I stand before you, at this moment, with every vow I made you at the altar unbroken, in letter and spirit;’ and she drew closer to him and laid her delicate hand upon his broad breast. ‘Wrong me not, Percy, even in thought.’

“The stern man hesitated. Had he not *wilfully* blinded himself, he had read truth and honor in the depths of the clear blue eyes that looked so unflinchingly into his own. For a moment, their expression overcame him; then, dashing aside the slender fingers that rested upon him, he left her with a muttered oath.

"Mary Lee had the misfortune to be very pretty, and the still greater misfortune to marry a jealous husband. Possessing a quick and ready wit, and great conversational powers, a less moderate share of personal charms would have made her society eagerly sought for.

"As soon as her eyes were opened to the defect alluded to in her husband's character, she set herself studiously to avoid the shoals and quicksands that lay in the matrimonial sea. One by one, she quietly dropped the acquaintance of gentlemen, who, from their attractiveness or preference for her society, seemed obnoxious to Percy.

"Mary was no coquette. Nature had given her a *heart*; and superior as she was to her husband, she really *loved* him. To most women, his exacting unreasonableness would only have stimulated to a finished display of coquetry; but Mary, gentle and yielding, made no show of opposition to the most absurd requirements. But all these sacrifices had been unavailing to propitiate the fiend of jealousy—and there she sat, an hour after her husband had left her, with her hands pressed tightly together, pale and tearless, striving, in vain, to recall any cause of offence.

Hour after hour passed by, and still he came not. The heavy tramp of feet had long since ceased be-

neath the window; the *pulse* of the great city was *still*; silence and darkness brooded over its slumbering thousands. Mary could endure it no longer. Rising and putting aside the curtain, she pressed her face close against the window-pane, as if her straining eye could pierce the gloom of midnight. She hears a step! it is *his*!

"Trembling, she sank upon the sofa to await his coming and nerve herself to bear his bitter harshness.

"Percy came gaily up to her and kissed her forehead! Mary passed her hand over her eyes and looked at him again. No! he was not exhilarated with wine. What could have caused this sudden revulsion of feeling! Single-hearted and sincere herself, she never dreamed of treachery.

" 'Percy regrets his injustice,' she said to herself. 'Men are rarely magnanimous enough to own they have been in the wrong;' and, with the generosity of a noble heart, she resolved never to remind him, by speech or look, that his words had been like poisoned arrows to her spirit.

"The following day, Percy proposed their taking 'a short trip into a neighboring town,' and Mary, glad to convince him how truly she forgave him, readily complied. It was a lovely day in spring; and the fresh air, and sweet-scented

blossoms, might have sent a thrill of pleasure to sadder hearts than theirs.

" 'What a pretty place,' said Mary. 'What a spacious house! and how tastefully the grounds are laid out. Do you stop here?' she continued, as her husband reined the horse into the avenue.

" 'A few moments. I have *business* here,' replied Percy, slightly averting his face, 'and you had better alight too, for the horse is restive, and may trouble you.'

" Mary sprang lightly from the vehicle and ascended the capacious stone steps. They were met at the door by a respectable grey-haired porter, who ushered them into a receiving room. Very soon, a little sallow-faced man, bearing a strong resemblance to a withered orange, made his appearance, and casting a glance upon Mary, from his little twinkling black eyes, that made the blood mount to her cheeks, made an apology for withdrawing her husband for a few minutes, 'on business,' to an adjoining room.

" As they left, a respectable middle-aged woman entered, and invited Mary to take off her hat. She declined, saying 'she was to leave with her husband in a few minutes.'

" The old woman then jingled a small bell, and another matron entered.

" 'Better not use force,' said she, in a whisper. 'Poor thing! So pretty, too. She don't look as though she'd wear a 'strait jacket.'

"The truth flashed upon Mary at once! She was in a *Lunatic Hospital*! Faint with terror, she demanded to see her husband,—assured them she was perfectly sane; to all of which they smiled quietly, with an air that said 'we are used to such things here.'

"By-and-bye, the little wizen-faced doctor came in, and listening to her eloquent appeal with an abstracted air, as one would tolerate the prattle of a petted child, he examined her pulse and motioned the attendants to 'wait upon her to her room.' Exhausted with the tumult of feeling she had passed through, she followed without a show of resistance; but who shall describe the death-chill that struck to her heart as she entered it? There was a bed of snowy whiteness, a table, a chair, all scrupulously neat and clean, but the breath of the sweet-scented blossoms came in through a *grated window*!

"Some refreshment was brought her, of which she refused to partake. She could not even weep; her eyes seemed turned to stone. She could hear the maniac laughter of her fellow-prisoners—she could see some of the most harmless marching in

gloomy file through the grounds, with their watchful body-guard.

"Poor Mary! She felt a stifled, choking sensation in her throat, as if the air she breathed were poison; and, with her nervous, excitable temperament, God knows the chance she stood to become what they really thought her! To all her eager inquiries she received only evasive answers; or else the subject was skilfully and summarily dismissed to make place for one in which she had no interest.

"Little Dr. Van Brunt daily examined her pulse and 'hoped she was improving—,' or, if she wasn't, it was his *interest* to issue a bulletin to that effect, and all 'company' was vetoed as 'exciting and injurious to the patient.' And so day after day, night after night, dragged its slow length along, and Percy, with the meanness of a revengeful spirit, was 'biding his time,' till the punishment should be sufficiently salutary to warrant his recalling her home. But while he was quietly waiting the accomplishment of his purpose, the friend of the weary came to her relief.

"'Leave me, please, will you?' said Mary to the nurse, as she turned her cheek to the pillow like a tired child. 'I want to be alone.'"

"The old woman took her sewing and seated

herself just outside the door, thinking she might wish to sleep. In a few moments she peeped cautiously through the open door. Mrs. Percy still lay there, in the same position, with her cheek nestling in the palm of her little hand.

" 'She sleeps sweetly,' she muttered to herself as she resumed her work.

"Yes, dame Ursula, but it is the 'sleep' from which only the trump of the archangel shall wake her!

"Mary's secret died with her, and the *remorse* that is busy at the heart of Percy, is known only to his Maker."

LXXV.

"DON'T DISTURB HIM!"

" 'If your husband looks grave, let him alone; don't disturb or annoy him.' "

OH, pshaw! when I'm married, the soberer my husband looked, the more fun I'd rattle about his ears. '*Don't disturb him!*' I guess so! I'd salt his coffee—and pepper his tea—and sugar his beef-steak—and tread on his toes—and hide his newspaper—and sew up his pockets—and put pins in his slippers—and dip his cigars in water—and I wouldn't stop for the Great Mogul, till I had shortened his long face to my liking. Certainly he'd 'get vexed,' there wouldn't be any fun in teasing him if he didn't, and that would give his melancholy blood a good healthful start, and his eyes would snap and sparkle, and he'd say, 'Fanny, WILL you be quiet or not?' and I should

laugh, and pull his whiskers, and say, decidedly, 'Not!' and then I should tell him he hadn't the slightest idea how handsome he looked when he was vexed, and then he would pretend not to hear the compliment—but would pull up his dickey, and take a sly peep in the glass (for all that!) and then he'd begin to grow amiable, and get off his stilts, and be just as agreeable all the rest of the evening *as if he wasn't my husband*, and all because I didn't follow that stupid bit of advice ['to let him alone.' Just imagine ME, Fanny, sitting down on a cricket in the corner, with my forefinger in my mouth, looking out the sides of my eyes, and waiting till that man got ready to speak to me! You can see at once it would be—be—Well, the amount of it is, I *shouldn't do it!*

LXXVI.

A MODEL HUSBAND.

“‘A MODEL HUSBAND.—Mrs. Perry, a young Bloomer, has eloped from Monson, Mass., with Levins Clough. When her husband found she was determined to go, he gave her \$100 to start with.’

THAT'S what I call doing things *handsomely*! I should have taken that 100 dollar bill and handed it to Mr. Levins Clough, as a healing plaster for his disappointed expectations, and gone home, hugging my old man, and resolving to mend every rip in his coat, gloves, vest, pants, and stockings, 'free gratis,' from that repentant hour, till the millennial day. I'd hand him his cigar-case and slippers, put away his cane, hang up his coat and hat, trim his beard and whiskers, give him the strongest cup of tea, and the brownest slice of toast, and all 'the dark meat' of the

turkey. I'd wink at his sherry cobblers, and whiskey punches, and mint juleps. I'd help him get a 'ten strike' at ninepins. I'd give him a 'night-key,' and be perfectly oblivious what time in the small hours he tumbled into the front entry. I'd pet all his stupid relatives, and help his country friends to 'beat down' the city shopkeepers' prices. I'd frown at all offers of 'pin money.' I'd let him sit and 'smoke' in my face till I was as brown as a herring, and my eyes looked as if they were bound with pink tape; and I'd invite that widow Delilah Wilkins to dinner, and run out to do some shopping, and stay away till tea-time. Why! there's nothing I *wouldn't* do for him—he might have *knocked me down with a feather*, after such a piece of magnanimity. That 'Levins Clough' could stand no more chance than a woodpecker tapping at an iceberg."

LXXVII.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY.

“ ‘When you are angry take three breaths before you speak.’

I COULDN'T do it, said Mrs. Penlimmon. Long before that time I should be as placid as an oyster. ‘Three breaths!’ I could double Cape Horn in that time. I'm telegraphic wire; if I had to stop to reflect, I should never be saucy. I can't hold anger any more than an April sky can retain showers; the first thing I know, the sun is shining. You may laugh, but that's better than one of your foggy dispositions, drizzling drops of discomfort a month on a stretch; no computing whether you'll have anything but gray clouds overhead the rest of your life. No; a good heavy clap of thunder for me—a lightning flash; then a bright blue sky and a clear atmosphere, and I am ready for the first flower that springs up in my path.

“‘Three breaths!’ how absurd! as if people, when they get excited, ever *have* any breath, or if they have are conscious of it. I should like to see the Solomon who got off that sage maxim. I should like better still, to give him an opportunity to test his own theory! It’s very refreshing to see how good people can be, when they have no temptation to sin; how they can sit down and make a code of laws for the world in general and sinners in particular.

“‘Three breaths!’ I wouldn’t give a three-cent piece for anybody who is that long about anything. The days of stage coaches have gone by. If you ever noticed it, nobody passes muster now but comets, locomotives, and telegraph wires. Our forefathers and foremothers would have to hold the hair on their heads if they should wake up in 1855. They’d be as crazy as a cat in a shower bath, at all our whizzing and rushing. Nice old snails! it’s a question with me whether I should have crept on at their pace if I had been a cotemporary. Christopher Columbus would have discovered the New World much quicker than he did had I been at his elbow.”

LXXVIII.

THE EARLY BLIGHT.—BY FANNY FERN.

“‘As Love’s wild prayer, dissolved in air,
Her woman’s heart gave way,—
But the sin forgiven, by Christ in Heaven—
By man is curs’t alway.’

OH, *do not* speak so harshly of her, Aunt Nancy !
If you could see how sorrowfully she looks
upon that beautiful boy — how she starts at the
sound of a strange voice — how hopelessly she sits
with her large eyes fixed upon the ground, hour
after hour, — so young and so beautiful, too ! ’

“‘Yes, yes,’ broke in Aunt Nancy ; ‘I dare say !
they’re *always* beautiful. I tell you there’s no
mercy for her in *this* world, or *t’other*, as I knows
on,’ and the indignant spinster drew up her long
crane neck. ‘Why didn’t she behave as she
oughter ? Did you ever hear a word said against
me ? Beauty is nothing ; behavior is everything.’

“‘But Aunt Nancy——’

“‘Don’t ‘but’ *me*; I tell you I won’t have anything to do with her—such a thing as *she* is!’

“What crushing words to fall upon a broken heart! for Leila’s quick ear had caught them. Her features grew rigid and pallid, and little Rudolph, frightened at their expression, climbed timidly to her lap.

“Leila’s heart was full of bitterness—those cruel words yet rang in her ears; and, for once, she pushed him rudely from her,—then the *mother* triumphed; and drawing him with a caressing motion to her breast, she sobbed—‘*God pity us!*’

“Those were long, weary hours, she passed in that solitary chamber, in vacant listlessness, with her head leaning upon her hand, till poor little Rudolph fell asleep amid his toys, from very weariness,—then she would rouse herself, tie on his little hat, and wander out into the green fields—on, on—as if trying to be rid of *herself*! But there was no healing balm in nature. Just such sunny days, alas! had dawned on her before, when her sky was pure and cloudless. She accepted mechanically the little field-flowers that Rudolph placed in her hand. Those eyes! that brow! those curling chestnut locks! No *father’s* hand was there to bless them!

"Poor Leila! Her own sex pass by on the other side *contemptuously*—and the *other*? (*God save her!*) ✓
She shrinks nervously from their bold glance of admiration, and repels scornfully any attempt at acquaintance. There is no bright spot in the future, save the hope that the false promise made in God's hearing to the unprotected orphan will yet be redeemed.

"Little Rudolph's cheeks crimson with fever. Leila says to herself, 'tis better he should die, than live to blush at his mother's name,' and then she shudders,—for where on the desolate earth will she find so loving a heart as his is now?

"The young physician knows her history. Leila answers his questions with a cold dignity; but he is generous and noble-hearted, and would scorn to remind her by word or glance of her sad secret. Fresh flowers lay between Rudolph's thin fingers, and delicacies unattainable by Leila, are daily offerings. Rudolph will need them no longer! Leila sheds no tear, as the look that comes but once, passes over that waxen face! But she trembles, and shudders, as if the last gleam of hope was shut out by the closing of that coffin-lid. Even 'Aunt Nancy' condescends to pity her, (at a distance!)

"Oh, shame! that woman's heart should be so

relentlessly unforgiving to her erring sister ! Who shall say, in the absence of a *mother's* angel watch, and with a *warmer heart* than the one that now sits in cold judgment upon her, Leila's sin might have been *yours* ? Oh,

‘Love her still !
 Let no harsh, cold word,
 Man ! from lips of thine be heard !
 Woman ! with no lifted eye
 Mock thou her deep misery ;
 Weep ye—tears, *tears alone*
 For our world-forsaken one,—
 Love her still !’

“Leila sits alone—pale and passive. The young physician approaches her respectfully. Leila looks at him with amazed wonder, as he would raise her to the dignity of a ‘*wife*.’ Tears of happy pride fall from her eyes, at his generous avowal ; and so she thanks him with a full heart, but says, sadly, ‘*her heart is with Rudolph's father !*’ and Leila is left *again* to her own sad thoughts. She wanders listlessly about the house—she takes up a newspaper, (scarcely heeding what she reads ;) she glances at the list of ‘deaths,’—it is there!—*his name !* and it signs the death warrant of his *last* victim ! Leila falls heavily to the floor. *Her heart is as still as his own !* Betrayer and betrayed shall meet again ; and *God* shall be the *Judge !*”

LXXIX.

THERE'S ROOM ENOUGH FOR ALL.

“What need of all this fuss and strife,
Each warring with his brother?
Why should we in the crowd of life,
Keep trampling down each other?
Is there no goal that can be won,
Without a fight to gain it?
No other way of getting on,
But grappling to obtain it?’

NO, my gracious! no! We have to fight like
ten thousand; contest every inch of ground;
and if you get one step forward of your neighbor,
envy and malice will be on your skirts in a twink-
ling; trying to hoist themselves up, or pull you
down—they are not particular which. For every
laurel you earn, you will gain the everlasting hate
of every distanced competitor; not that they won't

smile and congratulate you; but Judas left a few descendants, when he 'went to his own place.'

“ ‘Room enough for all?’ *not by a hemisphere!* For every crumb Dame Fortune tosses out of her lap, there’s a regular pitched battle and no place to fight in. Well, if your blood leaps through your veins as it ought, instead of putting your thumbs in your mouth and whining about it, you’ll just set your teeth together, make a plunge for *your share* of the spoils, and *hold on to it after you get it*, too! My gracious, yes. Peace, and love, and harmony are very pretty things, no doubt, but you don’t see ’em often in this latitude and longitude.

“Well, there’s no help for it. You just go pussy-cat-ting through creation once, with velvet claws, and see what *lean ribs* you’ll have to show for it! At the mercy of every little pinafore ruffian that knows English enough to cry, ‘scat!’

“If you earn anything beside *cat-nips*, I hope you’ll come and tell me! No—I’m persuaded it’s no use to talk through your nose, and look sanctified; male and female Moses-es always get imposed upon. Besides, you heathen, if you look in Genesis, you’ll find yourself a fore-ordained victim—no dodging the curse. ‘By the sweat of your brow,’ you must earn your bread and butter. The

old serpent who fetched it on us, knows we are all fulfilling our destiny! Eve wasn't smart about that apple business. I know forty ways *I* could have fixed him — without burning my fingers, either. It makes me quite frantic to think I lost such a prime chance to circumvent the old sinner!"

LXXX.

THE CROSS AND THE CROWN.

ARE there no martyrs of whom the world never hears? Are there no victories save on the battle-field? Are there no triumphs save where one can grasp earth's laurel crown? See you none who rise early and sit up late, and turn with a calm, proud scorn from a *gilded fetter to honest toil*? Pass you never in your daily walks, slight forms with calm brows, and mild eyes, whose whole life has been one prolonged self-struggle? Lip, cheek and brow tell you no tale of the spirit's unrest.

"The 'broad road' is passing fair to look upon. The coiled serpent is not visible amid its luxurious foliage. The soft breeze fans the cheek wooingly; laden with the music of happy, careless idlers. Youth, and bloom, and beauty; ay! even *silver hairs* are there! No tempest lowers; the sky is

clear and blue. *What stays yonder slender foot?* Why pursue so courageously the thorny, rugged, stumbling path? The eye is bright; the limbs are round and graceful; the blood flows warm and free; the shining hair folds softly away from a pure, fair brow; there are sweet voices *yonder* to welcome! *there is an INWARD voice to hush!* there are *thrilling eyes there*, to bewilder! *What stays that slender foot?*

“Ah! *The foot-prints of Calvary's* SUFFERER are in that ‘*narrow path!*’ That youthful head bends low and unshrinkingly to meet its ‘crown of thorns.’ The ‘*Star in the East*’ shines far above those rugged heights, on which its follower reads: —‘*To him that OVERCOMETH*, will I give to eat of the Tree of Life!’

“Dear reader, for a *brief day*, the CROSS; for *uncounted ages*, the CROWN!”

LXXXI.

TOM FAY'S SOLILOQUY.

“ ‘ Most any female lodger up a stair,
Occasions thought in him who lodges under.’ ”

DON'T they, though? Not a deuced thing have I been able to do since that little gipsy took the room overhead, about a week ago! Pat—pat—pat, go those little feet over the floor, till I am as nervous as a cat in a china closet, (and *confounded* pretty they *are*, too, for I caught sight of 'em going up stairs.) Then I can hear her little rocking-chair *creak*, as she sits there sewing, and she keeps singing, ‘ *Love not—love not*,’ (just as if a fellow could *help* it.) Wish she wasn't quite so pretty; it makes me decidedly uncomfortable. Wonder if she has any great six-footer of a brother, or cousin with a sledge-hammer fist? Wish I was her washerwoman, or the little nigger

who brings her breakfast; wish she'd faint away on the stairs; wish the house would catch fire to-night! Here I am, in this great barn of a room (all alone;) chairs and things set up square against the wall; no little feminine *fixins* round; I shall have to buy a second-hand *bonnet*, or a pair of little gaiter-boots, to cheat myself into the delusion that there's *two of us*! Wish that little gipsy wasn't as shy as a rabbit? I can't meet her on the stairs if I die for it; I've upset my inkstand a dozen times, hopping up, when I thought I heard her coming. Wonder if she knows (when she sits vegetating there,) that Shakspeare, or Sam Slick, or somebody says, that 'happiness is born a twin?' 'cause if she don't, I'm the missionary that will enlighten her? Wonder if she earns her living, (poor little soul!) It's time I had a wife, by Christopher! (Sitting there, pricking her pretty little fingers with that murderous needle!) If she was sewing on *my dickeys*, it would be worth while now. *That's it*—by Jove! *I'll get her to make me some dickeys*—don't want 'em any more than Satan wants holy water, but *that's* neither here nor there. I shall insist upon her taking the *measure of my throat* (bachelors have a right to be *fussy*.) There's a pretty kettle of fish, now; either she'll have to stand on a cricket, or I shall have to get on

my knees to her! Solomon himself couldn't fix any thing better; deuce take me, if I couldn't say the right thing *then*! This fitting dickeys is a *work of time*, too. Dickeys *isn't* to be got up in a hurry.

"Halloo! there's the door-bell! there's a great big trunk dumped down in the entry! 'Is Mrs. Legare at home?' *M-r-s.* Legare?! I like *that*, now! Have I been in love a whole week with M-R-S. Legare? Never mind, *may be* she's a *widow*! Tramp, tramp, come those masculine feet up stairs—(handsome fellow, too!) N-e-b-u-c-h-a-d-n-ezzar! If I ever heard a kiss in my life, I heard one then! I won't stand it!—it's an invasion of my rights. I'll listen at the door, as I am a sinner! 'My dear husband!!!'—p-h-e-w! What right have sea-captains on shore, I'd like to know? Confound it all! Well, I always *knew* women weren't worth thinking of; a set of deceitful little monkeys; changeable as a rainbow, superficial as parrots, as full of tricks as a conjuror, stubborn as mules, vain as peacocks, noisy as magpies, and full of the 'old Harry' *all* the time! There's 'Delilah,' now; didn't *she* take the 'strength' out of Sampson?—and weren't 'Sisera' and 'Judith' born *fiends*? And didn't the little minx of an Herodias dance John the Baptist's head

off? Didn't Sarah 'raise Cain' with Abraham, till he packed Hagar off? Then there was—— (well, the least said about HER, the better!) but didn't Eve, the *foremother* of the whole concern, *have one talk too many with the old 'serpent?'* Of course; (she didn't do *nothing else!*) Glad I never set *my* young affections on *any* of 'em! Where's my cigar-case! How tormented hot this room is!"

LXXXII.

A CHAPTER ON CLERGYMEN.

OH, walk in, Mr. Jones, walk in; a minister's time isn't of much account. He ought to expect to be always ready to see his parishioners. What's the use of having a minister, if you can't use him? Never mind scattering his thoughts to the four winds, just as he gets them glowingly concentrated on some sublime subject; that's a trifle. He's been through college, hasn't he? Then he ought to know a thing or two; and be able to take up the thread of his argument where he laid it down; else where's the almighty difference between him and a layman? If he can't make a practical use of his Greek and Latin and Theology, he had better strip off his black coat, *unshake* his 'right hand of fellowship,' and throw up his commission. Take a seat, Mr. Jones; talk

to him about your crops; make him plough over a dozen imaginary fields with you; he ought to be able to make a quick transit from 'predestination' to potatoes. Why, just think of the man's salary—and *you helping to pay it!* Nebuchadnezzar! haven't you hired him, soul and body? He don't belong to himself at all, except when he's asleep. Mind and give him a little wholesome advice before you leave; inquire how many pounds of tea he uses per week, and ask him how he came to be so unclerical as to take a ride on horseback the other day; and how much the hostler charged him for the animal, and whether he went on a gallop, or a canter, or an orthodox trot? Let him know, very decidedly, that ministers are not expected to have nerves, or head-aches, or side-aches, or heart-aches. If they get weary writing (which they've no business to,) let them go down cellar and chop some wood. As to relaxation suggestive of beautiful thoughts, which a gallop on a fleet horse through the country might furnish, where the sweet air fans the aching temples caressingly, where fields of golden grain wave in the glad sunlight, where the blended beauty of sky and sea, and rock and river, and hill and valley, send a thrill of pleasure through every inlet of the soul—pshaw! that's all transcendental nonsense,

fit only for green boarding-school girls and silly scribbling women,—a minister ought to be above such things, and have a heart as tough as the doctrine of election. He ought to be a regular theological sledge-hammer, always sharpened up, and ready to do execution without any unnecessary glitter. That's it! .

“Fact is, Mr. Jones, (between you and I and the vestry door,) it is lucky there are some philanthropic laymen like yourself who are willing to look after these ministers. It's the more generous in you because we are all aware it's a thing you don't take the *slightest pleasure* in doing (?) You may not get your reward for it in this world, but if you don't in the next, I shall make up *my* mind, that Lucifer is remiss in his duty.”

LXXXIII.

FANNY FERN ON HUSBANDS.

“‘Husbands should by all means assist their wives in making home happy, and strive to preserve the hearts they have won. When you return from your daily avocations, meet your beloved with a smile of joy and satisfaction—take her by the hand—imprint an affectionate kiss upon her lips.’

ISN'T that *antimonial*? Don't you do any such thing! If you've made a married woman of her, I'd like to know if that isn't an honor that she might spend a life-time trying to repay you for; and come out at the little end of the horn *at that*?

“Land of love! there's many a woman *dies* of 'hope deferred.' Put *that* in her ear. Ask her what in mercy she thinks would have become of her, if you hadn't taken pity on her. Make her sensible of her beatified condition. Just tell her that any 'little favor' you do for her now, is an

†extra touch of philanthropy; that you may possibly go whole days without noticing her at all—except to stow away the food she prepares for you;—that, as to thanking her for every button she sews on, Cæsar! the boot is on the *other foot!* and should she lose her beauty or get sickly, of course she can't expect you'll care as much for her as when she was bran-new—the idea is absurd. She has no business to grow ugly; and as to sickness, it *would* be stepping off your pedestal to be puttering round, inquiring whether your wife's gruel was furnished at the right time or not; you've got other things to do, of more importance; such as betting on elections, peeping into concerts and theatres, and so forth.

“‘He might take *me*, too.’ You nonsensical little nuisance! In the first place—he—he—he—well, the upshot of it is, *he don't want you!* it would spoil all his fun. So just sit down in your rocking-chair and contemplate your stocking-basket; and if your spirits droop for change of scene, for a kind word, or a loving glance—that's nothing! You can die any time you get ready; he will stop mourning for you long before the weed on his hat gets rusty. Besides, the world is full of women—a real crowd of 'em; he knows that

well enough ; dare say he'd be obliged to you to pop off. 'Variety is the spice of life.'

"So there's the map before you, my dear. *That's all there is of Life.* If you've got married, you've climbed to the top of the hill—so now you can do as the rest of the wives do—stand still and crow a little while; and then commence your descent. No new discoveries to be made that *I know of.* Cry, if you feel like it—pocket handkerchiefs are only ninepence a-piece now."

LXXXIV.

FANNY'S IDEAS ABOUT MONEY MATTERS.

"The Military Argus has a long and prosy article headed 'How to make Home Happy.' A friend of ours has now a work in preparation, which solves the question—'It is to give your wife as much money as she asks for.' This entirely abolishes the necessity of kisses and soft sawder."

True Flag, Aug. 28.

BETTY! throw up the windows, loosen my belt, and bring me my vinaigrette!

"It's no use to faint, or go into hysterics, because there's nobody here just now that understands my case! but I'd have you to understand, sir—(fan me, Betty!) that——o-o-h!——that——(Julius Cæsar, what a Hottentot!) that if you have a wife *as is a wife*, neither 'kisses,' 'soft sawder,' or 'money,' can ever repay her for what she is to you!

"Listen to me! Do you remember when you were sick? *Who* tip-toe-d round your room, arranging the shutters and curtain-folds with an instinctive knowledge of light, to a ray, that your tortured head could bear? *Who* turned your pillow on the cool side, and parted the thick, matted locks from your hot temples? *Who* moved glasses and spoons and phials without collision or *jingle*? *Who* looked at you with a compassionate smile, when you persisted you 'wouldn't take your medicine because it tasted so bad;' and kept a sober face, when you lay chafing there like a caged lion, calling for cigars and newspapers, and mint-juleps, and whiskey punches? *Who* migrated, unceasingly and uncomplainingly, from the big baby before her to the little baby in the cradle, without sleep, food, or rest? *Who* tempted your convalescent appetite with some rare dainty of her own making, and got fretted at because there was 'not sugar enough in it?' *Who* was omnipresent in chamber, kitchen, parlor and nursery, keeping the domestic wheels in motion that there should be no jar in the machinery? *Who* oiled the creaking door, that set your quivering nerves in a twitter? *Who* ordered tan to be strewn before the house, that your slumbers might be unbroken by noisy carriage wheels? *Who* never spoke of

weary feet or shooting pains in the side, or chest, as she toiled up and down stairs to satisfy imaginary wants, that 'nobody but wife' could attend to? and who, when you got well and moved about the house just as good as new, choked down the tears, as you poised the half dollar she asked you for, on your forefinger, while you inquired 'how she spent the last one?'

"*'Give her what money she ASKS for!'* Julius Cæsar! (Betty! come here and carry away my miserable remains!) Nobody but a *polar bear* or a *Hottentot* would WAIT to have a wife '*ask*' for 'money!'"

LXXXV.

A LETTER TO A SELF-EXILED FRIEND IN THE COUNTRY.

DEAR NORAH:—‘Tell you the news!’ Ah, I *knew you’d come to it!* I was *sure* you’d tire of your *oyster life*, up there in the mountains. Pleasant, isn’t it—after dandelions and buttercups have ceased to be a novelty—after you know who lives in the little brown house opposite, and who in the hut at the end of the lane? After you have read through that ‘Alpha and Omega’ of a country library—*the Almanac!* After you’ve watched your landlady wash dishes, and feed pigs, and make butter, till you are qualified to take a diploma in those branches yourself! After you’ve seen the old rooster fight his hen-harem till they are subjugated to his lordly mind! After you’ve listened to the drowsy hum of insect life, till you

are *half a vegetable* yourself! After you have seen the old ricketty front door fastened up, when the hens go to roost, and every soul in the house in the 'land of Nod,' and you sitting at your window, *expiring* for a new sensation, though it come in the shape of a lightning stroke, or a tornado! listening compulsorily to the doleful doxology of the cricket, and the *base* voluntary of the bullfrog, and lamenting that brick and mortar are *unfashionable* in dog-days! True, 'tis a pity—pity 'tis true—that the *mind rusts*, while the *body flourishes*, in the country.

"Not less to be avoided, is that mockery of comfort, a gay watering-place; where neither mind nor body can remain *en dishabille* for one blessed hour. Where slander, and gossip, and humbug, reign triumphant; where caps and characters are pulled to pieces by the feminines, and the chart of *conquest* is marked out (without a shoal or quicksand,) by the *gentlemen*. Where half a year's salary is spent in a week by the ambitious dandy, (in embryo,) who gets laughed at for his pains and pretensions, and returns with damaged pockets and wardrobe to his attic room, to be dunned remorselessly by tailor and laundress for many a pitiless day. Where the simpering demoiselle who has cried 'give, give,' to papa's pocket-book, till it is

as dry as 'Gideon's fleece,' catches in the net of her one hundred dollar shawl and ruinous silk, some brainless fop, who finds, too late, that '*papa's stocks*' are—*nowhere*!

"No! no! Commend *me* to *home*, with all its little familiar comforts. Small they may be, but indispensable. Your nice little rocking-chair, where you have had so many pleasant reveries—that '*porte feuille*,' and the memory of the friend who gave it you, and the thousand little mementos that meet your eye, all suggestive of *happiness*.

"Commend me to a *city* home! where my mind can be kept fresh and bright with interchange of thought with gifted minds, and my heart warm with loving words and beaming smiles; where I can put my hand upon newspapers and new publications, before they are spoiled for my reading, by criticisms, and reviews, and *parrot repetitions*!)

"And as for '*trees and fresh air*!' a drive with a friend through the many beautiful outlets from our busy city; or a *walk* on our lovely Common, of a balmy evening, where the fragrance of new-mown hay comes wafted from the hills across the river, and the stars are mirrored in the clear depths of the mimic pond, and the soft wind plays refreshingly over your heated temples—then—a *soft, lull-*

ing serenade 'in the small hours,' and '*rosy dreams till daylight!*'

" 'Tell you the news,' hey? Well, the *great Daniel's* thoughts, at present, are upon *fish-line and hook*—particularly the last *English hook!* The 'Maine liquor law' is the *main* question, and who'll 'pay the *Scot-t,*' is another! Bread and balloons have 'riz;' *gloves* is 'tight;' flowers 'looking up;' *dickies* is 'depressed;' '*stocks*' is '*scarce*;' *belles*, none '*in the market:*' beaux—'improving;' guardians '*quiet*;' and I am,

" Yours, *till you get married!*

" FANNY FERN."

THE END.

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